With Christ Among the Miners

H. ELVET LEWIS

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WITH CHRIST AMONG THE MINERS

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WITH CHRIST AMONG THE MINERS

INCIDENTS AND IMPRESSIONS OF THE WELSH REVIVAL

BY THE REV.

H. ELVET LEWIS

AUTHOR OF "BY THE RIVER CHEBAR," ETC.

PROPERTY OF
THE CHURCH ON THE WAY

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PREFACE

THIS volume is not meant to be a history of the Welsh Revival; it provides a series of personal impressions and incidents, and is devotional in its aim and compass. Where it skirts the edge of controversy, an attempt has been made to be judiciously fair, and to furnish data for general conclusions, rather than to thrust forward private opinions. It is possible to dwell too exclusively on the bright and delightful features of the revival, and find ease in the optimist's bower. It is also possible to fix the eyes on its shortcomings and mistakes, and betray the opportunities it has provided. A local folly, a temporary delusion, should not be suffered to discount the national gain.

While the book is mostly drawn from personal observation, a few of the incidents are from the direct narrative of friends. We would also express our obligation to a volume in the vernacular, *The Revival and the Revivalists* (Y Diwygiad a'r

Diwygwyr), published at the *Goleuad* office, Dolgelly, and containing a large number of local narratives, mostly among the Calvinistic Methodists.

As few names as possible of persons or places have been given: for the movement was pre-eminently democratic. The people as a whole were made the Spirit's instrument. If we have spent most of our time among the miners—using the term in its broadest sense—it is simply because they form the majority of the nation, and affect the whole directly.

H. ELVET LEWIS.

September, 1906.

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PART I

MANY SOWERS, ONE SEED

CHAPTER I

"HE HATH SHED FORTH *THIS*"

CHAPTER I

"HE HATH SHED FORTH *THIS*"

As the autumn of 1904 in Wales recedes farther and becomes more and more a memory, it grows more profoundly mysterious. At the time, to get hold of a date, to visit a place, to contemplate a personality, seemed explanation enough of all that was going on. We know better, far better, to-day. Dates, places, and persons were only outward and visible symbols of a wave—more, a tide—nay, an overwhelming flood, that has no everyday name, no secular explanation. The apostle of Pentecost had to be content with the one syllable—THIS! Above the whole movement then stood *This*; out of it all now shines *This*—nameless, mystic, all-subduing. Many waited long for its coming; their hunger for it made them at times announce its near advent: but when it came it was a catholic surprise. Even the watchmen upon the walls of Salem knew not what to say; but they were glad. In the first days of its coming, at Ebenezer, Aberdare, two old pilgrims—who had never forgotten the Revival of

1859–60, but had kept their Simeon-like watch—suddenly sprung to their feet at a prayer-meeting, and, with arms uplifted, shouted : " Here it comes ! old '59 ! " There was no name for it, only the equation of an old and hallowed memory. It was *This*.

To write its record, to review its course, to pass equable judgment upon its manifold result, must, at best, be only an attempt, partial in scope, incomplete in its audit. It has not only swollen the current of the nation's life ; it has changed the river's course. The entire history of Wales has been re-shaped by it. True, it is not without its disappointments, its inconveniences, its regrets—all that a reasonable man would expect. " Miry places " and " marishes " unhealed there will be, apparently there must be, after every crystal flow of holy waters from the sanctuary. But let not the unfruitful exceptions make us forget the lush meadows, the trees of beauty and of healing on either bank. As long as the nation remains, there are trees of this river's blessing in 1904–5, " whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed."

Are these seasons of refreshing, in whole or in part, beyond control of the Church ? Can we compel their coming ? or are they to be placed among the predestinate things, unconditioned blessings of

God's sovereign will? One is tempted to answer the second part of the question affirmatively, when considering it in this light: No amount, no form, of organised effort could produce in 1906 what seemed as natural as a breath of air in the early months of 1905. I have seen, occasionally, an elaborate attempt to make it come: nothing was produced but disaster. Much of last year's fire still remains: it burns inwardly more than outwardly; once or twice this year I have seen it blaze forth with something of its virgin flame. But the very rareness makes its far-offness stand out more definitely. Why? There are thousands of hearts that would welcome it—possibly hearts cleansed by it, and more fit therefore to greet and appreciate its second appearance than its first. But one would feel it almost a blasphemy to suggest an organised intercession for its reappearance. We must settle down again patiently to wait—work and wait—for another such season; but we know little whether we can "haste the coming" of the day. Of one thing, however, we are sure, that our waiting, our soul's thirst, our instant and constant prayer, our whole life of walking with God, create and supply a reservoir of spiritual influences which the Spirit can use at the right hour. If there is something absolute in the coming of the Spirit, there is also something conditioned. Predestination does not

make human action of less value, but of more. We are of worth enough to have been taken into account in God's eternal counsels.

Our present attempt will deal with apparent sources and with recognised results. There may be human sources that will never be marked in any map of earth; there may be results too secret as yet, too deep, to be tabulated here. "Lo, these are parts of His ways: . . . but the thunder of His power who can understand?"—or the stillness of His dew either! The Spirit is one, in all ages and places, but it can use a thousand varied instruments. And already we see the saying of Savonarola in a wider application, verified, as to many an used instrument in the Welsh Revival: "When the Higher Agency is withdrawn from prince or priest, he is no longer an instrument, but a broken tool." Perhaps some or much blame attaches to the tool; perhaps more pity than blame.

In another way the Spirit has confirmed His own hand in the movement. Every promise relating to the Comforter contained in John xiv.–xvi. has been abundantly fulfilled during these months. "He will reprove," said the promise; tens of thousands know anew since 1904 how true it is. "He shall not speak of Himself; . . . He shall glorify Me," said the promise. What new kindness, what sweetness of affection, has gathered around

the Name and Person of Jesus during these two years! What new meaning the title "Son of Man" came to bear—the Man who comes nearest to every man, from childhood to old age. A father had through drink fallen into an early and dishonoured grave, leaving his widow and children in want of bread. It was one of his children, raggedly clad, that left every heart in one prayer-meeting aching and yet exultant, as in his childish prayer he used phrases that must suffer in translation :—

"Dear Jesus, I thank Thee for coming here as a poor man, so very poor—perhaps as poor as I am. Thou couldst have chosen the finest palace in the world to be born in; but Thou wouldst have been too high for me then. But I know how to come to a manger. I wish I had been living when Thou wert here. Everybody will want to cast their crown at Thy feet in heaven, but I should like to have laid my crown at Thy feet when they were stained with the dust of the road, bleeding and wounded."

Beside this child's personal sentiment of Jesus, we place this portion of a woman's prayer :—

"Dear Saviour, I thank Thee that Thou wert crucified with Thine arms outstretched, to show

that there is welcome for every one to come to Thee. Oh, I thank Thee that the old devil was not allowed to tie Thy hands behind Thy back, or at Thy side, or folded on Thy breast, but outstretched wide, to tell the whole world to come to Thy bosom. Until these last days my prayer was very small—for myself, for my friends, for Wales; but I have looked between the outstretched arms, and now, Lord, save the whole world! save everybody!"

To me, it was not the charm of quaintness that made these sayings so memorable, but the feeling they produced of being fresh from life. Those who used them seemed to say: "We have seen Jesus!"

So, on the very threshold, we forewarn all that we are in the presence of an unexplained but impressive mystery; nor will the mystery be diminished as we trace some of its manifold manifestations. "We do not know"—said Evan Roberts himself, in one of the earlier meetings of his first journey—"how this revival has originated; we have no idea how many thousands have been praying in private for it; nobody knows how many: nothing but the Day of Judgment will reveal it." He went on: "There is a new life coming into Wales now. Everything will be changed. Why? Because Wales is opening her doors to receive the Holy

Ghost." And without forgetting or minimising the mistakes, the disappointments, the passing extravagances, the new difficulties in part created or increased by the movement, we cannot but still write—"He hath shed forth THIS."

CHAPTER II

CHARACTERISTICS OF RELIGIOUS LIFE IN WALES

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CHAPTER II

CHARACTERISTICS OF RELIGIOUS LIFE IN WALES

The Welsh people, in their religious life, have developed certain forms and methods in a way peculiar to themselves. In retaining their own language, they have safeguarded their Celtic inheritance, for better for worse. They have a bias towards the intellectual and social contents of religion, even when they are not moved to live its life. Religiousness, if not religion, is a national interest. This comes out in many of the institutions to which we are about to refer, and these had much to do with the democratic aspects of the recent revival.

The Welsh Sunday School

The Sunday School in Wales has two elements of power that do not prevail elsewhere—(1) its large adult membership; (2) its catechetical methods. In rural districts practically the whole community belongs to the Sunday School. In towns and

populous valleys this is not so much the case, though here also a very large proportion of the churchgoers are also scholars. Apart from the religious bias of the race, we believe that the common method of conducting class-teaching has much to do with the retention of scholars. The teacher presides and conducts, but seldom or never gives an address on the lesson. Each member of the class, by question or answer, or both, is expected to make a contribution to the exposition and application of the lesson. Free discussion is permitted and cultivated; the too forward is restrained, the too backward is encouraged. There is little need to point out that this not only trains them from the first in the phraseology of doctrine and devotion; it also stamps the text of the Bible more securely upon their memory. It supplies a stock of knowledge and expression which may become buried and lost for years, but is there, to be used when the soul's awakening comes.

Then, too, it is still the custom in many parts for one school to visit another, the whole service being devoted to impromptu questions and replies on a chosen chapter. It is a kind of exhibition day; scholars among each other try to excel, and the whole school is jealous of its honour. Arising out of this, the schools of a district are grouped together, and a united festival is held at intervals, for which

the music has been specially prepared, and chapters specially studied. Some of these services are as interesting, as impressive, as evangelistic, as the finest preaching. It is religion established by the democracy, and voluntarily sustained by it. They stand, men of many conditions, almost equal: "ward against ward, as well the small as the great, the teacher as the scholar."

Prayer-Meetings and Societies

One never hears in Welsh Wales of "the week-evening address." It is observed in some of the English churches: otherwise it is unknown. Prayer-meetings are an essential part of the church's syllabus, not infrequently even taking the place of the morning or evening service on Sundays. If the expected preacher does not make his appearance, there is no nervous disturbance. Without any ado, a prayer-meeting is held, as if all had been pre-arranged. Not only so, but, in country districts especially, the pilgrim prayer-meeting is an old and honoured institution. This means that the meeting passes in circuit from house to house—the cottage of the labourer as well as the freeholder's farmstead—week by week. The present writer owes more than he can tell to the Tuesday evening prayer-meeting of the neighbourhood where he was brought up, cir-

culating in this fashion from house to house. Young and old were invited and helped to take part ; many of the efforts were very humble, but it was the common people's academy of devotion, where a Thomas à Kempis would have felt at home. Nor should we omit to mention that the Missionary prayer-meeting on the first Monday of each month is still largely observed in Wales.

The " Society," born of the Methodist Revival of the eighteenth century, is almost as universal as the prayer-meeting. To conduct it is an art in itself. Sometimes a theme is started—perhaps from the preceding Sunday's sermon—and each in turn has a chance of contributing, either an exposition or an experience, or at least a text or a hymn. If the Christian Endeavour movement has not obtained among Welsh churches, it is because the " society " meeting had in part " prevented " it—to use the Biblical phrase. It is the Methodist class-meeting modified, freely adapted to the genius of the race.

The " Cymanva "

This word, in the Welsh Bible, is the equivalent of " solemn assembly " (Joel ii. 15), and of " general assembly " (Heb. xii. 23). It applies mostly to the annual denominational gathering of the churches of a county, or a group of counties. As a rule the

meetings occupy two days, one session being given to business, all the remainder being preaching services, to which special preachers are invited. They are held mostly between the end of May and the beginning of July, and, for choice, in the open air. They move, year by year, from place to place ; and it is almost a rule that the more sequestered the spot, the larger the audience. People come by train, on foot, cycling or driving, sometimes from great distances, starting early, returning late. It is a very mixed congregation, naturally ; but it is safe to say that it will contain a large number of the faithful, the choice ones, of the churches, the men and women of prayer and life-long service—a congregation that helps to make preaching. The writer's experience of these annual meetings for the last fifteen years leads him to remark that in nine cases out of ten the weather was favourable, and that never a summer passed without at least one meeting where the rapture and fervour bordered on revival experiences. The ninth wave would not be what it is, but for all the precedent waves, the last reaching a mark almost as high as itself. Within the walls of an ancient castle, with only the blue sky for roof—on a hillside gently swept by the summer breeze—in a wooded retreat on the outskirts of a town, strains have from time to time been heard, during all these years, which were easily recognisable again in the raptures

of the revival. They were the Spirit's rehearsals for the day of song.

There was also—and there is—the Singing Festival. For this again choirs and churches unite, and come together periodically to render a programme —hymn, and psalm, and anthem. But frequently during the last few years the song became larger than the programme : that characteristic expression of Welsh fervour—the frequent repetition of a favourite strain—proved the presence of something more than musical art. The revival did not create the refrains that swept a vast congregation in their torrent ; it found them already in the people's memory and heart ; it charged them with fresh power ; it sanctified them anew. At one of these festivals, held some years ago at Neath, the late Dr. Joseph Parry (writer of the tune *Aberystwyth*, among many others), moved by the *hwyl* of the meeting, foretold that the next revival would be markedly a singing revival. " I may not live to see it," he continued, " but some of you who are here to-day will see it, and you will recall my words." He was laid to rest in 1903, but his words were remembered, and proved true.

The Welsh "Hwyl"

The word has a particular as well as a more general meaning. In its more general sense of a " good

time," it may be applied to a political meeting, an eisteddvod, a concert, or even a sale. When things are going well, it is a season of *hwyl*. But it has a more private interpretation. It is used to denote effective melody of speech. All true oratory is instinctively, unconsciously set to music; the tune can be discerned by a listener with a good ear, set down and copied, in notes and rhythm. But this is specially noticeable in Welsh preaching; more so, perhaps, than in any other language, though it is not unknown to preachers in other tongues, as in Italian. There is a manufactured form of it; there are extravagant varieties of it; but when it comes naturally, with the rising warmth of emotion, and is made the instrument of the inward spirit with the aid of a well-modulated voice, its charm makes it an incalculable power for good. It sways a congregation almost at will. It is heard, not only in the pulpit, not only on the day of the great *cymanva*, but may suddenly transform the humblest prayer-meeting.

Many visitors from England and other countries were startled at the readiness, not of a few, but of almost the entire congregation to take part in prayer and song; but long rehearsals, all unknowing, lay behind. What Moses saw was not a tree of Paradise descending out of heaven in a robe of fire, and filling the desert with other-world's fires: he saw a common

bush of the desert touched of God into flame that fed the leaf it kindled. Those prayers, those refrains, at meetings never to be forgotten by the stranger from near or far, were no sudden shower from the sky either : they were ordinary men and women that prayed and sang, trained in the school of long years, and now set on fire by the Spirit whose very flame becomes the soul's manna. It was not a metrical expedient, in the great hymn of the *Veni Creator*, that brought the " fountain of life " and " the fire " into indisputable union—

Fons vivus, ignis, charitas.

In all the training and discipline, the toil of memory, the practice of piety, during more than forty years, the Holy Spirit had been the living fountain, too still to be heard, too hidden to be seen by the passer-by. Every one saw the fire : some were perhaps tempted to think that it stood by itself, with unrelated glow and all-separate flame. Nearer the truth was the sentiment I heard in a boy's prayer at Bethesda : " O Lord, we should like Thee to open the graves to-day, and let the old people come back to *see* that their words are not forgotten, and their prayers are not lost."

CHAPTER III

THE WHITE LINE OF REVIVAL

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THE WHITE LINE OF REVIVAL

THERE are traces of the action of revivals in Wales from the first appearance of Christianity here. It explains much that is contained in legends of the saints; it has given form to some of the traditions which gather around the life of St. David; it reappears, time after time, as at the coming of the "little sons" of St. Francis and the Lollards, and again at the dawn of Nonconformity, when, in the words of Walter Cradock, "the Gospel ran over the mountains between Brecknockshire and Monmouthshire, as the fire in the thatch"—some hundreds of people, filled with good news, telling it to others.

The Evangelistic Revival of the eighteenth century had two sources—one from within, and the other from without. Daniel Rowlands became the leader of the native movement. Howell Harris brought the fire from Oxford, and kept nearer, for a while, to Wesley and to Whitfield. But the two forces were

soon merged, and the whole movement was infused by the native spirit and assumed national characteristics. The old churches were renewed, new churches had to be formed : a new nation came out of it. In their work on *The Welsh People*, Principal Rhys and Sir D. Brynmor Jones remark : " In 1730 the Welsh-speaking people were probably as a whole the least religious and most intellectually backward in England and Wales. By 1830 they had become the most earnest and religious people in the whole kingdom." While making some allowance for the exigencies of an antithesis, this statement, in its substance, is scarcely to be disputed. True, this result was not the fruit of the revival alone. The revival, which started in 1737, was followed by a great educational reform, secular and religious ; a new literature had been born ; a new social outlook had been gained,—all these forces, building on the revival, helped to make Wales what it is described to have become by 1830.

During the nineteenth century there were several revivals—national, in a modified sense, all of them ; one of them undoubtedly so. A brief sketch of the more remarkable of these will show how certain traits are transmitted from one to another, as by a hereditary law ; and how these have again reappeared in the latest of all.

No lover of Snowdon but knows Beddgelert and

the Vale of Gwynant. In a farmhouse in the vale, one Sunday in August, 1817, a humble "exhorter" —Richard Williams by name—was expected to take a service. He came, but the congregation was scanty. John Elias was preaching that day at Tremadoc, and the fame of the great preacher had, in spite of the distance, reduced the exhorter's numbers almost to the lowest point. There was a hardness in the atmosphere, too, that made the discouraged preacher's task still more difficult. The people who were present envied those who had gone to hear John Elias: they sat before Richard Williams, but their ears were at Tremadoc. He struggled through lesson and prayer, and then took up the sermon, and warmed to his task. And then, somewhere in the sermon, the inexplicable happened. Preacher and congregation were transformed. The humble "exhorter" stood forth a prophet of the Most High, in Pentecostal glow, and the house was filled with the Pentecostal cry of awakened souls. And in that Vale of Gwynant, that Sabbath evening, men said, awe-stricken: "We never saw it on this fashion." Within five weeks of that day there was scarcely a house in the vale but the breath of prayer had filled it.

It reached the village of Beddgelert in its own way. On a Sunday in September a class of young

girls was reading the Crucifixion chapter in St. John's Gospel. The teacher was a young woman of devout, earnest mind; and as they read the story, verse by verse in turn, something came into the narrative unfelt before; silent tears stole down the cheek of each reader, and a sense of awe took them one and all. At the close, when the school was, as usual, being publicly catechised by one of the teachers, his own spirit suddenly took fire in warning the young people against some local fair of evil repute. A line out of one of Williams of Pantycelyn's Welsh hymns seemed to possess him, "God's grasp is the surest"; and as he repeated it more than once, the feeling which had melted and awed the young women's class affected the whole school. Not many days after, the chapel had become the scene of convictions and conversions. "Some were praying for pardon, kneeling on the floor of the pew; others, standing on a form, were uttering praise for God's mercy; some were marching to and fro, singing with their whole soul the song of deliverance." It was a season of rejoicing. One day even, while busy hay-making, some one started singing a hymn to himself, another caught it up, and another, till the whole band of haymakers, forgetful for a while of their toil, became a band of praying, singing worshippers. This revival continued for three or four years; and its

influence on the Snowdon district has been carried on to this day. It spread to other parts, but not generally.

An old survivor, being asked whether he could recall any signs preceding and heralding this revival, replied that he could remember nothing; "except," he added, "that the air for months seemed full of brotherly kindness and love."

Dolyddelen is far on the other side of Snowdon from Beddgelert, between Festiniog and Bettws-y-coed. Some twelvemonth previous to the Beddgelert incident, Williams of Wern was preaching here on the work of the Holy Spirit, and in the course of his remarks he said: "What if you were to consent to have Him to save the whole of this parish? 'Ah, but how can we have Him?' Well, hold prayer-meetings through the whole parish; go from house to house—to every house that will open its door. Make it the burden of every prayer that God should come here to save. If God has not come by the time you have gone through the parish once, go through it again; but if you are in earnest in your prayers, you shall not go through half the parish before God has come to you." The seed was sown, but apparently it took no root, save in one unlikely soul. Among those attracted to hear the famous preacher was one woman, old, and

lonely, and irreligious. She was accustomed in her cottage to use the light of a rush candle, but for a prayer-meeting she felt that nothing poorer than a wax candle would do. Next morning she bought two, to be ready in time. But the weary months passed, and no prayer-meeting called at her lowly door. She went at last to the shop where she had purchased the two wax candles, and asked diffidently, "When is the prayer-meeting coming to my house?" "Prayer-meeting at your house! What prayer-meeting?" "The prayer-meeting which Mr. Williams of Wern said was to go from house to house." The shopkeeper felt rebuked, but answered off-handedly, "Oh! they care very little what anybody says." "Well, indeed, I bought two candles nearly a year ago, and have gone to bed many a time in the dark, leaving them unburnt, lest the meeting should come and find me without a candle." The word struck home; he told it to the church; the pilgrim prayer-meeting was started, and the preacher's prophecy fulfilled. It would be almost enough to say of this revival that it brought to Christ, amongst other men of note, one of the most eloquent of all the preachers of Wales, John Jones of Tal y Sarn—"the people's preacher," as he was affectionately called.

1829: 1839: 1849: 1859—these four dates followed

in such rhythmical order, with a decade between each, that they had almost produced in Wales a mild superstition. When 1869 passed, and then 1879, without any striking recurrence, there was on the part of many a real disappointment. But other people have fallen into the foolishness of dates.

The first of the four spread far and wide. It was accompanied by a good deal of physical manifestation of joy—shouting, leaping, and dancing; so much so as to make their English co-religionists anxious for the good name of religion. There is a tradition that Rowland Hill, being sent down in the interests of sobriety, was himself so captivated as to forget to deliver his reproof. It is certain that reports make these scenes worse from a distance than they really are. Religious gossip is as loose as any other gossip. That there have been extravagances we may believe from some of last year's incidents. But these, if it somewhat marred the effect, left a valuable balance in favour. The contemporary records, in the magazines of the vernacular, provide ample evidence of a deep and lasting revival on the eve of the Reform Bill.

A temperance movement preceded the Revival of 1839. The first advocates of total abstinence were not only subjected to violent attacks in the press and on the platform, but literally persecuted. In Montgomeryshire some even tasted the cup of

martyrdom—and so helped to defeat the malice of the foe. In the wake of this—or indeed in part parallel with it—came the religious renaissance, not with sound of tabret and athletic joy as in 1829, but intense, silent, almost sombre. But it has been remarked that it was a very small percentage of those received into the churches then who went back. It is interesting to add that the immediate origin of the revival, apparently, was the visit of a Welsh minister from America—the Rev. B. W. Chidlaw.

The outburst in 1849 was largely due to the cholera scare. It bore the taint of fear. Thousands hurried into the churches, more particularly in populous centres, as in Glamorganshire. But "because they had no root, they withered away" in too many instances. Still, it is certified that many brought in through fear remained to learn the truth in love and live lives of faithful service. There are three gates into the Holy City from the north as well as from the south.

The revival of 1859–60 was more world-wide, taking Wales on its way. It had already effected great things in America when a Wesleyan Methodist preacher, the Rev. Humphrey Jones, returning home to Wales, and to his native village—Tre'rddol, North Cardiganshire—began to hold mission services, early in 1858. The birth of a revival seems always

to be in some sequestered nook, to be nursed for weeks among the silence of the hills, or in some creek beside the sea. The fire spread from hamlet to hamlet, and to the larger towns was only a report for months. The young Welshman from America found a comrade in the Rev. David Morgan, Calvinistic Methodist preacher. They preached prayer; they practised it; they seemed to compel it. There was no special gift in either to mark them out for the work which God had called them to do. The health of the former broke down; the latter retired into the rank of ordinary preachers, after the season of blessing. But during God's season they swept every audience into prayer. The churches of all denominations were moved to the core; very few districts were left unvisited by the power, but there were some. It bequeathed a blessing and a memory which lasted until 1904–5 came to take its place in the nation's living heart.

The interval of forty-five years between the two Pentecostal seasons was not without its occasional showers of blessing, though they were mostly local and personal. The most noteworthy of these is associated with the name of the Rev. Richard Owen, Calvinistic Methodist preacher. It was spread over the years before and after 1880—contemporaneously with some of the first evangelistic efforts of the

Salvation Army. His methods were all his own. He was the least imitable of all that have moved the heart of Wales. He preached as though he were conversing all the time with the open Bible, scarcely lifting his eyes from it : but what conversations they were ! When he passed away in 1887—"in the mid-journey of our life"—he could number, it is said, as the record of his few, flame-girt years, no less than thirteen thousand souls brought to Christ. "He had the privilege and the happiness," said Principal Edwards, "of setting at noon."

One of the young workers of that period, in South Wales, was Miss Rosina Davies. And all through the years, up to the present, she has carried on a constant mission among all the Churches. Even in the colder years her meetings often became reminiscent of 1859, prophetic of 1904.

More particularly among English residents in Glamorganshire and Monmouthshire, the "Forward Movement" of the Calvinistic Methodists—with Dr. John Pugh for its leader and Seth Joshua and others for its evangelists—had during recent years stirred a large amount of evangelistic zeal ; and, as will be seen in the course of the narrative, direct influences from this movement touched Evan Roberts. Nor should the eager but brief mission of the Rev. John Evans (Eglwysbach), as evangelist of Wesleyan

Methodism in the Rhondda Valley, be forgotten. Death removed him in the midst of his task; perhaps the immediate results of his efforts were disappointing. But he belonged to the whole nation: a child of the '59 Revival, he was a life-long revivalist and had been frequently given a foretaste of the harvest joy of 1905, though he did not live to mingle with the reapers.

We cannot pretend to have attempted more than to point out, in this series of memorable dates and episodes, the arches of the bridge spanning the gulf of the generations. It proves the proneness of Wales to revival. The birth of each of the four great divisions of the Free Churches has been hailed by a revival—Baptists and Independents at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Calvinistic Methodists in the middle of the eighteenth, and the Wesleyan Methodists at the dawn of the nineteenth.* Nor should great individual contributions from the Church of England be left out of account; especially the work, both in sermon and song, of Vicar Pritchard, contemporary of early Independents, followed by Griffith Jones of Llanddowror, evangelist and educationalist.

It is not too much to say that an air of wistfulness pervades the land at almost all times—either in

* In Wales, 1800 was the date of their origin.

retrospect of a past revival, or in prospect of a coming revival. It is either a charmed memory—"we were like them that dream; then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them"; or else it is a sorrowing, deepening appeal, "It is time for Thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void Thy law."

The wistfulness, on occasions, becomes almost, if not altogether, prophetic. It is not well to strain the language of heart's desire, and compel the event of to-day to exalt the eloquent earnest word of yesterday into prophecy; but such forecasts prove at least what currents of warmth are in the upper air. We select three illustrations from among several more that might be given. Some four years previous to the epiphany of the present revival, a saintly old man, on his death-bed and within a few days of dying in his Lord's peace, remarked that a mighty revival would visit the land before long. "And mark my words, it will come this time from the south; the former came from the direction of the north (referring to '59–60); but the next will be from the south." This was his interpretation of a vision he had seen, of white horses travelling northwards from the south. . . . One evening in August, 1904, returning home from a service in a village

chapel, slowly, over a long steep road, under the shadow of an oak forest that fitfully swayed to the soft night-wind, the present writer was considerably exercised by a remark which his companion made: "Do you know, I think we are very near something very wonderful? Some great things are going to happen, in the churches, very soon!" He could not explain to me why he cherished this assured hope: he *felt* it, he said. The speaker had lived all his life in one of those quiet rural neighbourhoods which seem to be a little world in themselves, moving in their own orbit. I was interested and moved at the time, but much more so as the first news of the revival, some three months later, began the fulfilment of his anticipation. "And there were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night"—they were God's first audience when the gospel was sung by the firstborn sons of light. . . . At the commencement of 1903 the late Dean Howell published a kind of New Year's epistle to the nation. In it he dwelt solemnly on the fact that a revival must be near, or else the nation would go back. They were about to pass through a chill and wasting period of indifference, of formalism, of defeat, unless God in His mercy would visit them with a dayspring from on high.

"Take note," he wrote, "if I knew this to be my last message to my fellow-countrymen, before

I am summoned to Judgment, the light of eternity already breaking on me, this is what I would say: that the chief need of my beloved nation at this moment is—A spiritual revival through a powerful outpouring of the Holy Ghost." He died, January 15th, just as his letter was being read.

CHAPTER IV

WHITENING FIELDS

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WHITENING FIELDS

New Quay—colloquially stated to be fifteen miles from everywhere—looks out from between its rocks on Cardigan Bay, commanding as fine an expanse of sea as any sea lover could wish. In summer time it is full, not so much of visitors, as of returned natives. The children of the coast are glad to revisit these hills and rocks, after twelve months of toil in town and mine. Let it not be forgotten that it is in the same county as Llangeitho, where Daniel Rowlands wrought wonders in the eighteenth century.

For some time previous to 1904 many in these seaboard parishes had felt more and more ill at ease in Zion. The life of the churches was not what it should be. Ministers and teachers were often saddened by the partial estrangement of young people from the inner experiences of faith. The Rev. Joseph Jenkins, Calvinistic Methodist minister at New Quay, had, among his own denomination, raised the question of a series of special conferences more than once. It was a call to searching of heart, to

prayer, to self-judgment. The first conference was held here on the closing day of 1903 and New Year's Day, 1904, the young people being specially invited to attend with prepared minds. The Rev. W. W. Lewis, of Carmarthen, the Rev. J. M. Saunders, M.A., of Swansea, and his wife, had been invited to take part. The meetings proved very helpful to all the churches of the district, and left a healthy impression ; but there was no remarkable sign of any sort to foretell what would come out of them—that out of three sounds would be framed

"Not a fourth sound, but a star."

One Sunday evening in February Mr. Jenkins had preached on "Faith overcoming the World." In the course of his sermon, dealing with "the world," he felt strangely drawn out, as though forced to give his very soul to his audience. He went home, and by-and-by, one of the members of his church—Miss Florrie Evans—after walking for half an hour outside the house, between two minds, at last stood at his door. She came in, but at first could say nothing. Then she broke the silence with "Help me! The care of my soul is nearly killing me. I cannot live like this. I saw the world in to-night's sermon. I am under its feet." After some conversation, he asked her, "Can you say 'My Lord' to Jesus Christ?" "No, I understand that; but

I cannot. How can I tell what He may ask me to do? Perhaps some very hard thing." "Yes, oh yes, He asks hard things—it is a very strait gate that leads to the peace and joy of the gospel."

Next Sunday, after the morning service, the young people's meeting was held as usual. No paper was forthcoming, so Mr. Jenkins asked for "experience," remarking at the same time how scarce it was. One or two young men spoke, but the minister was not satisfied. He said kindly that it was not a speech he wanted, but personal experience. After slight silence Miss Evans rose, and said—"I love Jesus Christ with all my heart." She said just that, and no more; and yet it was everything. The whole meeting found itself in tears, silently sobbing, without knowing why. "Thank you," said Mr. Jenkins, "you have given the meeting a 'lift.'" "Don't thank me," she replied, "but the Holy Spirit. I was forced to say it."

What is there in the words themselves to account for all they have since produced? The question brings us to the shining mystery that guards the Spirit's sanctuary and procession. The words might well be spoken at any Christian Endeavour meeting, and perhaps yield no harvest, or but little. But here they came in some golden moment of Providence. The meeting went on, that February morning, in the remote village by the sea, unknown,

unreported. But the district was moved by the news; crowds came to the subsequent united meetings. Then when it was thought well to have separate meetings in the various churches, instead of the one united meeting, the work still proceeded slowly, quietly.

Early in August Miss Rosina Davies was conducting special services in the Congregational chapel, and at one of the meetings the manifestation of power was exceptional. The village was crowded with people from many parts; when they returned to Glamorganshire, many of them carried more fire than they could well keep to themselves. Early in September the gracious work was proceeding in many separate districts. While General Booth was making his triumphant tour from Penzance to Aberdeen—reaping long-delayed appreciation—a work was silently progressing in many hearts, in several churches, with none to report it, and none to recognise its hidden power. In the issue of the Congregational weekly, *Y Tyst*, for September 21st, the Rev. John Thomas, of Merthyr, began a short series of striking articles on "Recent Awakenings." He referred, by name, to the remarkable work which had been going on for some time in the English Methodist Church at Tonypandy, in Rhondda Valley, and to the missions of Miss Rosina Davis. In the closing article (October 19th) he quotes a description of the

prayer-meetings which had been going on for some time in one church: "We have now a young people's prayer-meeting every Thursday evening at 7, and Sunday afternoon at 4.30. In these meetings we invite any one to take part, without naming; and we have blessed services. They sometimes last for three hours, but no one gets tired. A brother or sister will rise and read God's word, another will pray, another give out a hymn, another speak a word of experience, another sing, etc. They have continued up to the present moment, and there is every sign that they will continue for some time longer."

This is interesting, as showing that God never neglects His parallels; He prepares both the instrument and the hand that is to use it—both the sword and Cyrus who is to gird it. The spontaneous prayer-meeting, which was undoubtedly the making of the revival, was already being fitted and used, to be ready when the fit hand would take hold of it.

Meanwhile, in Cardiganshire, the first conference had been followed by another in June at Aberayron. and now another conference was arranged to be held at Blaenanerch—all the time within sight of the sea that sweeps Cardigan Bay. The date of this third conference was September 28th, and it was to make history. For to it came a young man named Evan Roberts, to drink of the cup of the

Lord's sufferings and to be baptized with His baptism.

Wales in 1903 was moving towards another crisis. The Education Act of 1902, met by English Nonconformists with " passive resistance," produced in Wales what was practically a national revolt. However easy and joyous it might seem on paper, when resolutions were carried with acclamation to the tune of fervent speeches, it was another matter to the people themselves, as the leaders knew and recognised. It meant conflict, stern conflict, close to the defences of everyday life. Parents would have to risk petty persecution and possibly the loss of daily bread; at best, neighbourhoods would be torn with dissension and misunderstandings. Although it is to the credit of both sides that the worst fears were not realised, the distraction and anxiety of thousands of hearts were none the less disturbing. The plough sank deep into the soil. They were not smooth, merry months that helped to prepare the nation to receive the thrilling message that came as a voice in the air with every autumnal wind of 1904.

PART II

THE HEART OF HARVEST

CHAPTER I

THE BANKS OF THE LOUGHOR

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THE BANKS OF THE LOUGHOR

Loughor—although a Roman station, and trailing still among its mines and tin-works some remainders of an ancient glory—was probably unknown beyond a few miles, till it acquired unhappy fame through the railway accident in September, 1904. But already other fame was waiting it through one of its sons.

Evan John Roberts—to give him his full baptismal name—was born there in 1878, the ninth child of his parents. From both his father and mother he inherited pious traditions. It was a humble hearth, but God's word and prayer ruled it. His schooldays were cut short, because of his being required to assist his father, after an accident in the mine with the pumps. But he carried with him to the mine the love of books. Apart from the three R's he studied from time to time astronomy and geology, poetry and music, shorthand and some of the occult sciences. Even as a boy in the mine he stood alone. There was something in him of quiet strength then

that compelled the men around him not to use foul language when he was within hearing. He was particularly fond of studying faces. It was his habit, during his walks, to read the faces he passed. A companion once remarked after a walk on a Saturday afternoon, "Another idle afternoon!" "Oh, no," he replied, "we must hate sin more after to-day." One of his favourite mottoes, after being obliged to notice some one's failings was, "Measure thyself by some one greater." When conversing with a congenial friend on the financial difficulties often hindering the way to the Christian ministry, he remarked, "God will raise great instruments for it from the mines and the fields." He added that he would like to see a reformer rise in Loughor—"one like Paul, to set the place on fire."

When he joined the Calvinistic Methodist Church at Moriah, at about thirteen years of age, one of the deacons advised him, at a society meeting, "Remember to be faithful. What if the Spirit were to come down, and you were absent? Remember Thomas, what a loss he suffered!" Recalling the incident, he said: "I said to myself at that time, 'I *will* have the Spirit.' In all weathers, in spite of all difficulties, I attended every service. Many a time, watching the other lads with their boats on the tide as I was going to chapel, I felt a desire

to turn back and join them. But no : ' Remember thy resolve to be faithful,' I would say to myself, and on I would go. Prayer-meeting on Monday night in the chapel ; Tuesday night, at Pisgah ; Wednesday, society ; Thursday, Band of Hope ; Friday, class—without a break all through the years. For ten or eleven years I had prayed for revival. I could stay down all night reading or speaking about revivals. It was the Spirit who was at that time moving me to speak of revival."

While working in the mine he had the Bible as his constant companion. He and his comrades used to hold a kind of Bible-class underground, reading the lesson from the Bible, and then discussing the verses. One night in January, 1897, a terrible explosion took place in Broad Oak colliery. Five men lost their lives. He was for days anxious about the fate of his Bible. When he was able to descend into the mine he found it in shreds—a page here, a page there. " I had to go on my knees," he remarked, " to get hold of the truth." And the words were more than a description of that strange scene in the mine.

He had taken part publicly in all meetings from the first. When, in 1895, a school was opened at Pisgah, in connection with the mother church at Moriah, he had to take a still more responsible part. He started a young people's prayer-meeting, followed

by a Bible-class. Every one was obliged to take some part. When any one felt too weak to begin, he would write a prayer for him, and so give him a start. Joined to this constant devotional practice was active self-denial. He gave his gifts to the cause not in silver but in gold, out of earnings not easily made.

His habits and his gifts all seemed to mark him out for the ministry. His church, his parents, encouraged him in the thought. But at the time he did not feel prepared to comply. It was noticed by some of his friends that the refusal, to some degree, changed his character. The culture of his talents became more absorbing than the culture of devotion. But the fire was burning inwardly in secret.

In September, 1902, he apprenticed himself to his uncle as a blacksmith. Underneath this change from the mine to the smithy was a characteristic purpose. He would learn a trade, in order to become an itinerant evangelist, a Minor Brother of the first Franciscan days, preaching and earning his livelihood as he went. The hours were long, and his time for Bible study was in consequence curtailed. But instead of quenching his thirst, the new difficulties intensified it. His Bible was ever beside him, to be consulted at any favouring moment. At last the hidden fire could not be contained in

his soul. At the end of fifteen months he felt compelled to yield to the higher call, borrowing an expression which more than one had used before him, "For me, a grave or a pulpit." Early in 1904 he had decided to take the path to the latter.

One night, that spring, he was kneeling by the bedside, before retiring to rest. What followed shall be given in his own words: "While on my knees, I was caught up into space, without time or place—communing with God. Before then I had only a God at a distance. I was frightened that night: never afterwards. I trembled so that the bed shook; this woke my brother, who feared I was ill. After that experience I used to be wakened every night a little after one. This was strange, because all through the years I used to sleep 'like a rock,' and no noise in my room would disturb me. After waking a little past one I would spend about four hours, without a break, in Divine communion. What it was I cannot tell, except that it was Divine. Then about five I would be allowed to sleep again, till near nine, and then I would be taken up to the same Divine communion, and so till twelve or one. They questioned me in the house why I did not rise earlier, and whether I was ill, etc.; but it was too Divine for me to say anything about it. This lasted for some three months."

In the meanwhile, the preliminaries of his accept-

ance as a candidate for the ministry among the Calvinistic Methodists were being arranged; and on September 13th, 1904, he had entered as pupil at the Grammar School, New Castle Emlyn, where generation after generation of students have been prepared for the Theological Colleges.

CHAPTER II

THE BANKS OF THE TIVY

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THE BANKS OF THE TIVY

In removing from the banks of the Loughor to the banks of the Tivy, one fear greatly troubled him—that he would miss those exquisite seasons of Divine communion. He had purposed to give half-an-hour only, each day, to this "practice of the presence of God." The first week he entered heartily into the school work, and then the spiritual power began to make inroads. A bad cold confined him to bed the second week for four days, but night and day he was in prayer. Again employing his own words: "The last night of the four the perspiration streamed down—the result of the cold and of my communion with God. On Sunday I got up. Seth Joshua was there. Tuesday night there was a prayer-meeting, and Sydney Evans and others came to see if I would go to the meeting. That moment I felt the Spirit descending upon me. It came irresistibly, and I rushed to chapel without top-coat. The influence began, I was ready to pray—to pray for strength to be given to the young women who were there

from New Quay, lest the people should look only to them. I had prayed in the house Monday night for strength to be given to them. I was not allowed to pray in chapel Tuesday evening. During the day I was asking, Where is the devil ? I was hard. I could gaze on the Cross without feeling anything. I wept because of my hard-heartedness, but not because of Christ. I loved the Father and the Spirit, but did not love the Son."

We are now at the confluence of two streams. The Rev. Seth Joshua—well known for years as an evangelist in connection with the Methodist Forward Movement in South Wales, and other evangelistic work—had been, as we have seen, holding services at New Quay. He had brought with him to New Castle Emlyn some of the young women whose hearts and lips the Lord had touched. They were going on to the third Conference, at Blaenanerch.

Scarcely restored from illness, Evan Roberts accompanied them on the Wednesday, driving some eight miles through picturesque scenes, until they came within sight of the sea. The brake was to start from the house of the Rev. Evan Phillips, a preacher of national fame, and one of the young evangelists of '59. When he reached the house, a prayer-meeting was proceeding. He did not go in—partly because he was afraid they would reprove him for coming at all, partly because he wished to talk about

his soul's experience with Miss Phillips ; for, he tells us, he felt " as hard as flint, as if some one had swept every feeling out of him." They arranged to pray for each other. But nothing particular happened that Wednesday ; and as they returned home at night, the young women from New Quay tried, but tried in vain, to help him, and break the hardness. " No," he said, " there is nothing for me but to wait for the fire to descend. The altar is ready, the wood upon it, and the sacrifice ready—only waiting for the fire to descend."

They started about six o'clock on Thursday morning, to reach Blaenanerch for at least part of the early service. His feelings to-day were more variable, now downcast, now joyous. It was a Sunday-school service such as we have already described, the Rev. W. W. Lewis being the questioner. The meeting was closed with prayer, Mr. Joshua leading. It was in this prayer, at the end of a number of petitions for the Lord to do this and that, that the words came in—" *and, Lord, bend us.*" No special emphasis of any sort was laid by the speaker on the word *bend*, but—to quote his own testimony again—Evan Roberts felt that the Spirit laid emphasis on the word for him. " ' That is what thou lackest,' He said to me. And as I passed out through the door, I kept praying, ' *O Lord, bend me !* ' "

At breakfast a little ordinary incident took place,

which shows how sensitive to spiritual signs he had become. He was offered some bread and butter, but refused it, because he had had enough ; then he saw another stretching out his hand for some, before it happened to be offered. Ah ! he thought, can God be offering His Spirit to me, and I am not ready to receive Him, while others, without having Him offered them, are ready to receive Him ? On the way to the next service, Mr. Joshua said, " We are going to have a wonderful meeting to-day." Evan Roberts replied, " I am almost bursting."

He felt he must take part in prayer that morning. As one after another prayed, he kept asking the Spirit, Shall I pray now ? Wait a little while, He would reply. " After several had prayed, I felt ' living force ' * entering my heart ; it held my breath ; my legs trembled violently. And after each prayer I kept asking, ' Shall I now ? ' while the ' living force ' went on increasing, increasing—almost to bursting. At last, when some one had finished praying, with my heart quivering, I would have burst had I not prayed. I fell on my knees, with my arms over the seat in front of me, the perspiration and tears pouring down, so that I believed blood was flowing out." One or two near at hand were wiping his face, while the agony continued some two minutes. His repeated cry was, " Bend me ! bend me ! bend

* His own English words.

us!" "It was God 'commending His love'* that bent me,—and I had never seen anything in it to commend! After I was bent, a wave of peace went over me. While the congregation were singing

> I am coming, Lord,
> Coming now to Thee,—

I thought of the bending in the Judgment Day, and I was filled with compassion for the people bent in the Judgment Day, and I wept. Afterwards it was the salvation of souls that weighed on my soul. Ever after that hour I was on fire to be allowed to go through the whole of Wales: and if it were possible, I was willing to pay God for the permission to go. A plan was drawn out, according to which eight of us were to go through Wales, I paying the expenses."

How every crisis of the soul seems to gather into itself the great history of the ages! As we pause reverently to view, not without awe, that tremendous conflict in the Methodist chapel, we seem to see the shades of undying saints gather around, and they are mirrored in the crystal flood of tears: Augustine, Francis of Assisi, Bunyan, Daniel Rowlands; countries and centuries are melted in one tear of the inmost soul of man.

Evan Roberts had prayed all through thirteen

* The Welsh version is stronger: "God singing the praise of His love."

years for the Spirit. For four years Seth Joshua had been praying that God would raise some one from among the people—from the mine, or from the plough—not from the Colleges, lest that might seem to crown earthly pride. There are two men who believe that their two prayers were answered that self-same day—September 29th, 1904.

The communications of the Spirit were continued on the following Sunday evening, in what he describes as a vision, in Bethel chapel, just before the Rev. Evan Phillips began to preach. In it he was told that six souls must be set on fire there, before he ventured to Loughor.

Happy days followed—happier than any he had hitherto known. It was during these October days and nights that he had more than one vision, which, however we may explain them, were real to him. One Saturday night in the garden he was watching the moon, when his friend Sydney Evans joined him. "The moon seemed larger than usual, her bosom heaving continually towards us, and an arm coming out of it, as if lifting something back with it. The brilliance was terrible. We could not understand the hand, but now I understand it was an answer to prayer."

Another vision was of the devil in the garden hedge, mocking him because of the low state of religion. Another time he saw him with the same

mocking, contemptuous look, but this time he saw another Person on his right hand, with a glittering sword in His hand, and with it He struck the devil till he fled and vanished.

He saw Christ weighing men in His balances, and he found himself wanting, until he had Christ's merit placed beside him, and then it was weighed down to the ground.

It will be seen that they came in the hours of his call and his mission. They have come to others, but in more prosaic form. Are they less, or are they more, because they came to him as they did? I have no wish to judge. If visions had their place and their meaning by the river Chebar, why not by the river Tivy?

CHAPTER III

THE RETURN HOME

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THE RETURN HOME

As October was closing, Evan Roberts found himself at home. For three weeks he had been restless to do his school-work: the vision rose, between him and his books, of the young faces of his companions at Loughor, waiting for his message and responding to his appeal. He and his friends had agreed to ask God for a hundred thousand souls in Wales. On Monday night, October 31st, at the close of the usual prayer-meeting, he commenced his work; the next night he went to Pisgah—his beloved mission school. It was scarcely to be expected that methods so startling as his proved to be should commend themselves to those who had for a lifetime carried on the Church's work in another fashion. "What! a new doctrine!" many felt—as on a Sabbath morning in a synagogue beside the Lake. How could it well be otherwise? Such a movement was bound from the start to cause friction, misgiving, misunderstanding. To those who have at all considered the cost of

reformations, nothing has happened in Wales these two years that could not have been forecast.

The young people responded to his call. Night after night the meetings grew in numbers and fervour. Before that first week was over, the Revival's confession of faith was announced in the four well-known articles :

1. A confession to God of all sins of the past hitherto unconfessed.

2. The giving-up of everything doubtful.

3. Open confession of Christ.

4. Ready and immediate obedience to every impulse of the Spirit.

Another thing also happened. The first night sixteen had confessed Christ, the second night seven ; the third night, when ten had come forward, he said it was not enough—he would not be content to leave the meeting till twenty had confessed Him. He prayed for ten more ; and then, to the accompaniment of spontaneous hymns and prayer, without any direct appeal, the number was made up to twenty.

It was the first momentous victory. Prejudice declined ; news of the meetings spread far and wide ; men and women of all ages thronged the chapel. On the Sunday evening he gave the crowded audience a prayer to repeat : "Send the Spirit now for Jesu's sake." "I had put in three more words,"

he explained, "but the Spirit rejected them. The first form I offered was—'O Lord, send the Holy Spirit now for Jesus' sake. Amen.' But I was forced to leave out 'Lord,' 'Holy,' 'Amen.' The Spirit will have no idle words." It was an indescribable service: it fed upon itself, continuing without a break till midnight.

That week became the type of many a week that followed, through the old year and into the new. What was done in a village was carried into the midst of denser populations; the scale grew larger, the interest vaster, the multitudes more numerous: but the method scarcely varied. The congregational petition for the sending of the Spirit—the four rules of the practice of faith—the missioner's conviction of direct communications from the Holy Spirit, bearing on every detail—the insistence on direct prayers for specified blessings: all these were introduced at those first meetings, and were never abandoned. In the rule dealing with unconfessed sins, emphasis was laid on the sin of unforgiveness. It was a glad gospel of the Father's love in a loving Saviour.

As the early news spread, prayer-meetings which had already been begun in other localities were vivified; a breath of expectancy passed warmly over the land, and prayer-meetings in fresh places were started. Almost if not altogether without

exception the gateways of blessing were the young people's prayer-meetings.

The first week at Loughor was experimental; the second week tested and approved the instrument. Strangers from neighbouring districts poured in, not without some natural curiosity and some reasonable criticism. The lateness of the meetings —continuing often beyond midnight—proved an offence to many, then and later, not without just cause; though the exceptional conditions partly justified it. Tuesday night the indifferent or hostile forces seemed about to conquer: it was a hard meeting from the first. But the revivalist refused to yield the ground. The conflict lasted for some nine hours—hours marked with tears of the eyes and of the soul. It was about four o'clock in the morning when a sense of victory pervaded the little company which had remained with him, steadfast to the end. Coming together in the evening of that Wednesday, at Brynteg Independent Chapel—for the meetings were meant to be undenominational—the fruits of the conflict more than compensated the long and weary vigil. He himself was radiant. "God does not keep back the blessing," he declared, "except to pay double." At this meeting he asked for a missionary collection. A man leaps to his feet, pale and trembling with anguish—forerunner and type of hundreds soon

throughout the land: he can scarcely stand to describe his feelings in the Slough of Despond; but he has come out, near the wicket-gate, and in a flash of joy, the pale, agonised face is there and then literally transfigured. His wife follows him; the whole congregation is like a hayfield in June swept by a wind from the west.

Diolch iddo,
Byth am gofio llwch y llawr!
(Ever praise Him,
Saviour of the dust of earth!)

began its triumphant career, as the refrain that welcomed home thousands of prodigals. The other refrain alternates with it:

Cerdd ymlaen, nefol Dân,
Cymer yma feddiant glan!
(Spread and shine, Fire divine,
Make this place entirely Thine!)

Here and there, some one changes a word, to sing—

Make this *heart* entirely Thine!

Next day there was scarcely a home in the whole neighbourhood without some stricken soul in it. One afternoon a young woman prayed for her father's salvation: before the day had passed, she was returning thanks for the answer. She prayed again for a brother and a cousin, away from home in

two different places : the following week, at one of Evan Roberts's meetings, the two were brought in.

Saturday night closed a fortnight of meetings never to be forgotten by those who attended them —nor ever on earth to be measured and weighed. The young leader was not present : he had started on his first missionary journey. His place was taken by Mr. Sydney Evans, his comrade from the first and co-worker in the mission, though not together in the same meetings. The latter, after the inauguration of the movement in the western parts of Glamorgan, became more distinctly connected with the mission in the mining valleys of Monmouthshire, both Welsh and English. His singing companion was Mr. Sam Jenkins ; and together they did a work second in public importance only to that of the leader and his immediate helpers.

Reflecting on the course of the whole movement, one is struck anew by the superiority over the finest theory of what comes direct from life in touch with God. Neither the four rules, nor the other emphasised teachings, were new : the newness came from their being life. And yet it must be confessed that something more than all we have found so far is necessary to account for the extent and expansion of the movement. We will again grant that the mission was fortunate in the press

reports of its first meetings. The two morning dailies of South Wales—the *Western Mail* and the *South Wales Daily News*—were well-informed and sympathetic, the former enthusiastic. These reports, kept up day after day, became an essential factor in the extension of the revival. Perhaps never before was such a movement written about in so many languages. But the explanation of all that took place in every part of Wales, affecting the ends of the earth, between November, 1904, and June, 1905, still eludes us. A Hand was reaching out, not indeed from the moon, but from a world that has no need of the light of sun or star.

CHAPTER IV

THE FIRST JOURNEY

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When Evan Roberts made his appearance on Sunday morning November 13th, in Trecynon—one of the outskirts of Aberdare—he was in the midst of the great industrial community of Glamorganshire. The ground was already prepared for him: it was one of the places revived before the revival. All the same, there was a natural feeling of strangeness in the first day's services; but it was visibly wearing away, from one meeting to another. When the Sunday was over, each week-day became a fresh Sunday: morning, afternoon, evening, an almost unbroken continuance of prayer-meetings, the number of conversions rapidly growing, and the character of many of them startling. Men who had been victims of intemperance for long years found themselves suddenly made strong to resist and overcome; men who had come in a mocking temper were borne on a flood of prayer, and, before they knew it, were

themselves praying. The evangelist himself was smiling and happy, the first to lead in every strain of joy. At those meetings he would quietly walk from pew to pew, scanning the faces as he passed, now pausing to whisper a few words of comfort or pleading, now staying longer to kneel in prayer beside some one. From the first he used his undoubted gift of second sight—not to venture on any name less old-fashioned ; from the first it was part of the strength of the movement, though it became also, especially later, part of its weakness.

He has gradually made his way, at one morning meeting, to one who seems to sit hard and unmoved in the confluence of mighty torrents ; he sits beside him, persuades, pleads, warns. For the moment he seems oblivious of the chorus of prayer and song all around him : he is alone with this man. And those who know the latter cannot help watching furtively the solemn struggle ; for the man he has taken in hand is a hard, surely an impossible case ! But instant and earnest prayer gathered around the two, especially when the young evangelist knelt. A few moments later the whole congregation is overcome, thrilled into tears and songs that alternate between sobs and exultations, as they behold a second kneeling figure ; and at sound of the broken confessions Ebenezer Chapel is taken with the awe of eternal things. It was the earnest and

type of thousands of scenes of the victory of prayer throughout all that winter in Wales.

As showing the irresistible strength of the forces at work came the conviction and open confession of some who had been prominently associated with the propaganda of anti-Christian teachings. One of them told how, with no desire to attend, he felt drawn by the singing to the vestibule, and then went away, but was forced to return the next evening. During the proceedings, in spite of every effort to control himself, he was conscious at one point of such anguish that his whole body was shuddering. He went home, having made no sign to the congregation of the hidden conflict. He joined with his family in singing a hymn, and then threw all the anti-Christian literature he possessed into the fire. When, next evening, he rose to confess, for a moment it seemed as if the whole audience were swept in a whirlwind of wonder and joy. Another member of the same local society, some two nights later, rent the hearts of all with his agonising appeal to his comrades—"Come to Jesus! Come to the Saviour! Come! Oh, come!" It moved one hearer to mockery. "What is the philosophy of a thing of this sort?" he asked, in the dialect of the society's debates. He got up to leave, but on the top of the staircase he was arrested by the grip of the irresistible; he thought he heard a voice —"Why

ask man ? Ask God." And leaping to the foot of the staircase, he rushed into the chapel again to declare himself for Christ. Some of those brought in through storm and fire have been even more zealous missionaries of their new faith than of their former doubts. These incidents produced not only a deep impression locally, but pioneered the way for many, in other localities, affected with scepticism. That winter witnessed many a holocaust of infidel and gambling books, with membership tickets of drinking clubs thrown in to feed the sacrificial flame.

From Aberdare he went to Pontycymer—from the inland hills to the borders of the Vale of Glamorgan, but still among a mining population and within an area already much affected. Indeed, it is doubtful if, after the first fortnight, he had the chance of personally initiating the work in any locality, so rapidly the influence ran in every direction. The meetings here were even more fervent, if anything, than those at Aberdare. There was a continued service from ten o'clock on Thursday morning till after two o'clock on Friday morning. In the first part of the first day Evan Roberts was overcome, as at his initiation at Blaenanerch. He fell on his face in the pew beneath the pulpit, weeping aloud and interceding. When he was able to calm himself, he rose and left, and did not return till the evening—

the service in the meanwhile conducting itself without a break. It was on Friday evening, at the closing service of the mission here, that the voice of a young girl of eighteen, Miss Annie Davies of Maesteg, came into the history of the revival. Professing Christ from childhood, trained in her home to serve Him with her vocal gifts, it was as the coming of Sister Clara to Francis. She sang, with tears on her face and victory in her voice, the mighty love-song of the revival—the hymn of Dr. William Rees (*Hiraethog*) :

Dyma gariad fel y moroedd.

The song is of the marvel of Divine Love, flowing as vast oceans of tender mercies in never-ebbing floodtide ; of the very Prince of Life dying, dying to redeem our forfeit life. Out of the radiant depths of the wonder comes the triumphant appeal :

Is there one that can forget Him ?
Or can cease His praise to sing ?

From that night she became an intimate helper and companion, her voice consecrated to the converting and uplifting of souls.

A quite common feature of the revival was illustrated at one of the meetings at Pontycymer—*viz.* that one of the humblest of all present might be used to bring on the crisis of a service, or even

to change its entire spirit. In the case we allude to it was the simple question, "Who will receive Jesus?" asked by a young wife with intense earnestness, that seemed to rend the cloud and make a way for the blessing. "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust." Does it not somehow assure the coming of every soul into its own, "some time—in God's good time"? Every soul among the countless multitudes of the redeemed will have its essential part to fill and adorn.

One of the cases here will further illustrate the irresistibleness of the power, and suggest its connection with the same power at Aberdare the previous days. One evening a man found his way to a local minister. He was a notorious character, known—only too well—in the whole valley. But he came to-night to see the minister privately—the service, held at the time, being too crowded for him to enter, and his business being more for private than public purpose. He took out a club membership-card, and said, "I want you to burn that first of all." When the minister hesitated, for fear he might repent of his repentance, he urged, "Yes, burn it, and don't look at it. Here are three more cards: burn them also." Then he explained how, hearing the minister preach a fortnight previously, he had been disturbed ever since, and felt that he could not go on any longer in the old way. They

prayed together, and as the man rose from his knees, he confessed further that on the way he had called at a public-house and ordered a pint of beer, but he had failed to take it up in his hand. "I tried my best, but it was no use, and I left it on the counter before coming here."

It would be unprofitable to give the list of places visited by him from this time up to Christmas. He confined himself to the hills and mining valleys of Glamorganshire, but the miners themselves were almost ousted from their own chapels by the crowd of strangers, from many lands, which, day after day, poured into these narrow, winding valleys, whose natural beauty has been marred in the interest of human living. At any time he was scarcely more than thirty miles from home, and only a hill or two lay between him and his starting-point at Aberdare. If the whole country was moved, it was not through his personal presence, but the reflection of his zeal. Morning, afternoon, night, the largest chapels were more than crowded to the door : it was difficult to get near them. Sometimes he himself found it hard to gain entrance, and one evening his singing evangelists were on the point of retiring in despair, when Miss Annie Davies struck up her favourite hymn—the song of "Love as vast as oceans" ; she had not finished the first line before her voice, recognisable among a thou-

sand, won for her a path through the surging crowd into the chapel.

We will select a few typical incidents, so as to reproduce, if possible, the atmosphere of that unprogrammed mission: the thrill at times of awe, at times of joy.

It was the revivalist's custom to enter the chapel when the service was well started. His addresses were simplicity itself. Something in the hymn sung as he was coming in, would, perhaps, give him the keynote. Or he begins by asking them, "What is your errand here to-night?" There is a movement in the pews, as though the inmost thought of many had been detected by that plain question and that piercing glance. "I have read some of your faces; I can see what you want. Some have received and are enjoying the Spirit's blessing; others have received it and lost it; others are here in the cold spirit of criticism—criticism of men who are labouring to lay hold upon God! Ah! yes, and some of you are here seeking entertainment. Entertainment? and you yourselves on the brink of destruction! God have pity upon you! Do I speak severely? I am bidden to do so. I speak as the Spirit prompts me, and it matters not if in obeying the Spirit I offend the whole world. I shall not be here long." In the midst of the prayers, the confessions, the hymns, he inserts some

phrase, brief and keen. "In God's house we are all one family: act here as at home, and at home as here." "'Is there peace?' is frequently asked at the Eisteddvod. It is time it were asked in the churches—and answered." "We are crowded here: there is plenty of room Above." He had days, or at least hours, of strange depression, which changed as with a flash into exquisite sunniness.

Whether he spoke at length or only in occasional sentences, he impressed his personality on every meeting. Neither in Wales nor out of it—as far as one can learn—has there been a sequence of meetings quite like his. He was seldom eloquent, though there were rare outbursts; and yet he achieved often far more than eloquence could. He seemed to perceive instinctively what each audience was capable of, and, as a skilled musician, he made each audience yield its value. Now he would reprove, now he would comfort and heal; now he would excite to rapture, now he would hush into stillness almost too exquisite to bear. More than once he turned the service into a Sunday-school festival of the Welsh type, questioning, and receiving the answer in a congregational chorus.

During those first weeks he met with some opposition, and had to deal on the spur of the moment with varied difficulties. Once a young man openly avowed himself an infidel. Evan Roberts, having

earnestly asked if he meant what he said, and having received an affirmative reply, said, "If so, let him stand up and state so publicly." The young man stood and said, "In my heart I believe that there is no God." As consternation spread among the crowded audience, and as some, in their excitement becoming foolish, would have put him out, the revivalist calmly replied, "No, no! pray for him;" and, turning to the young man, he begged him, in the solitude of his room, to reconsider his way of thinking God out of existence. When, at the same meeting, two expressed their disbelief in the deity of Christ, he asked all who accepted Christ as God to rise. All rose, except the first young man mentioned, and these two. Soon afterwards the three left. But a little later the same evening another, while expressing his belief that Christ is God, declared that he did not know what He had done for him, nor what need he had of Him as Saviour. There was a vein of lightness in the way this declaration was made, which made the revivalist ask why he laughed mockingly in speaking of One who died for him, though he did not feel his need of Him? In a cooler air we may demur to the wisdom of these methods of settling theological questions by a majority vote; but let it be remembered that they were impromptu, and that men of much maturer experience might be utterly

puzzled. Still during the same evening, he asked those in the service of the devil to stand. One solitary man stood, but the very act of so standing and declaring himself brought home to him all that it meant. His heart was pierced, he burst into tears, and there and then turned for mercy to Christ.

He felt obliged at times to deal drastically with unfavourable conditions. Where he was announced to be, nearly if not quite all the available chapels were opened for the thronging crowds ; but the building which he was likely to visit was often in a state of siege. Where people are so densely massed, real soul-work is made almost impossible. At Caerphilly, one evening, he felt this so keenly, that he appealed to some of those already blessed to leave, and ease the pressure. But very few or none moved. Having appealed the second time in vain, he took a bold course, and left the meeting. There was consternation among the crowd, and the whole service was on the point of breaking up, when one of the young singers on the platform asked, " Is it to be Evan Roberts or Jesus Christ ? " The tumult was stilled as suddenly as it rose, and in a few moments the effectiveness of the meeting was fully restored. Indeed, he himself seemed to perceive clearly, from the first, that what was essential was neither himself nor any one else, but for the people to realise their own personal priesthood to the full.

So that year in Wales drew towards its Christmas-tide. In October Evan Roberts was an unknown young student at a country town grammar school ; in December he is in the wide world's view. He left his home in November as an itinerant evangelist, believing fervidly in his mission, but utterly untried ; he returns at Christmas, tried and approved. And it is to the credit of his good sense, and to the praise of the infinite grace of God, that he appeared as simple-hearted, as utterly unspoilt by his unique popularity, as when he went forth.

CHAPTER V

THE PEOPLE'S RESPONSE

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WHILE recognising to the fullest extent the use which the Holy Spirit made of Evan Roberts as instrument of revival, equally remarkable was the quick, spontaneous rise of the people to the sound of the silver trumpet in Zion. From several directions hidden forces had been hastening into light of day ; and were we to use earthly speech, we would say that it was almost an accident that the effectual manifestation should take place on the banks of the Loughor, rather than in some other vale. But accident there is not in the Spirit's exquisite procession. Therefore out of many chosen one was divinely selected, the others also being made priests unto God. Many were waiting and silently training themselves : to one came the first word ; but as he repeated it, thousands of hearts recognised it as the word they were looking for.

It is as when a farmer, one autumn afternoon, turns out to set the hillside gorse on fire. He lights a small bush, and perhaps it fails ; lights it again, then another, and there is a local blaze : he passes

on to another part, and does the same ; and there are several red patches of fire. Then a servant, quick and eager, takes a dry, uprooted bush, just fringing it with flame ; and he runs along, leaving a line of fire budding at a score of points ; flame meets flame, fire kindles fire, sparks are caught in the wind and sow new flames on every hand : the entire hillside is ablaze. Evan Roberts became that herald of fire. He helped to join together the separate patches of fire ; the whole was caught in a great wind of God : and before 1904 passed away, the greater part of Wales was in a fervour of prayer and song. And the first month of 1905 carried the fire to all the nooks and places not already ablaze. By the end of January I could discover no town or hamlet, or sequestered mountain spot, but the Divine thing was there.

To separate Evan Roberts from the Revival would be impossible ; but to those who have looked deeper, equally impossible would it be to separate the people from it. It is, through and through, a democratic renaissance : were it not for that, it might have degenerated into a mere festival of emotion.

While in England and other countries the Church laments the estrangement of the working classes, here at the dawn of the twentieth century these, in their thousands, helped to create a movement whose end is not yet. Miners and quarrymen, field-

labourers and tin-workers—the whole artisanry of the Welsh nation, which means, of course, the overwhelming majority of it—joined in one immense prayer-meeting from north to south, from east to west. "It has burst out here, there, and everywhere," wrote Mr. W. T. Stead, at the year's close, "without leaders, or organisation, or direction."

While the reporters were diligently following Evan Roberts, and giving occasional news of his young comrades, the nation's revival was without any report, or with almost none. In thousands of villages every evening wore into midnight through a glow of instant prayer; conversions were taking place among little groups of often less than twenty in number. Many a morning when the daily paper brought news of crowded chapels and stirring scenes among Glamorgan's miners, the roadside labourer had also a secret in his heart, borne from a prayer-meeting at his little Bethel the previous night, which meant to him more than all the world. Heaven had whispered in his ear, and some day the whisper would return to become a part of heaven's choral song. The thing without a name—"THIS"—arrived in many guises, but in all of them it was unmistakable. Sometimes its first coming was through the syllables of a child, often through mothers and maidens, sometimes through a first convert, sometimes through some grey father out of the sanctuary

of prayer. The only certain thing about it was that nobody could tell when or how it would come. What kept young people, night after night, for long weeks in many instances, praying, waiting, losing heart, and again re-starting? What but the hope of the one supreme moment, outshining the rest of Time?

Its coming was in some instances perceptible: as perceptible as when the first morning breeze trembles through the lush meadow. A friend gives this experience. It was his habit at regular intervals to devote a Sunday morning service to the children. One of these was due the Sunday after the first news of the revival had begun to spread. He did not wish to disappoint the children; on the other hand, the devotional meetings of the week had made him conscious of his Church's awakening. He had purposed to tell the story of Livingstone's life. He was tempted to abandon the subject, and the children. But a truer wisdom saved him. He would give the Spirit the instrument he had prepared, except that he prayed more than usual for the Higher Arm. Sunday morning came; it was a happy service from the first, but not more than that, until—— How could he describe it? For suddenly, without any excitement, it seemed as if a perceptible *breath* passed over the congregation. Listening well before, now every face was lit, and every eye vigilant.

A moment before it was simply a good time; had any one interrupted, it would have been an interference. The next moment, for some *not* to have taken part, would have been the interference. The subsequent harvest in that church alone would have made an ordinary mission historic.

Take another church, with a great past and a living present. It is in the heart of an agricultural district, inconveniently far from a railway station. It has been served from time to time by eminent ministers; it has given to the pulpit of Wales and England such a succession of preachers for several generations that scarcely a home in the wide district but has given a son to the Christian ministry. Were one asked to foretell who would here bring on the decisive moment, these homes of traditional piety would naturally rise to the mind. But it was not to be so. No native was to obtain the honour; nor—in this Welsh of Welsh districts—a child of any Welsh home; but an English lad. In recent years, owing to the emigration of the sons of the soil to busier centres, their place has been to some extent filled up by drafting lads from English orphan homes and industrial schools. Many of these have settled down, and in time have learnt the language of the people. This lad was a recent comer, and consequently had only his native language. Perhaps it was the pathos of the boyish stranger within the gate,

in simple dialect English—beginning his first little public prayer with "O Lord, I am very far from home, but I cannot help it, I must pray"—that brought the dewiness into the air. It was the prayer of a charwoman—talented, but hitherto careless, her tongue oftener used against religion than for it—it was her prayer, as she returned to Christ, humbled, inspired, that completed the victory of the English lad's broken prayer. To-day his face is towards the ministry of the gospel.

As is well known, the ordinary programme of Free Church activity was submerged that winter. Literary societies, concerts, lectures, Sunday schools—nothing escaped. Or if occasionally a daring effort was made to keep faith with a syllabus, what began as a lecture would probably end in counting converts to the strains of *Diolch iddo !* Sunday after Sunday, ministers appeared, not in their pulpit, but in the midst of an officiating people, silent, or taking part as one of the others. Using the wisdom that comes after the event, it is now easy to see that this in some instances was carried too far. No flame can burn steadily without being fed. In the interests of candour it should also be recorded that sometimes the foolish or the evil-minded abused the liberty ; and, unhappily, a congregation had to save or avenge itself by drowning the unwelcome voice in a torrent of song. But reforms without abuses would mean

heaven begun and continued below, The worst part of the abuse was that it led the ignorant and the shallow to mistake passing forms of revival for the abiding reality. The loudest then are not the most fruitful now. On the other hand, many a convert, who started the new life with strong crying—who, possibly, could never have started it at all without such an emotional outburst—has been trained, through the kindness of Christian hearts, and the patience of the Spirit, into nobler and more useful ways.

It penetrated everywhere and pervaded everything. It was talked of in every railway train, and many a railway compartment became a place of united prayer—not incongruously, as things were conditioned during those days. Coal-mines had their sanctuaries, where prayer-meetings were regularly held. And these prayer-meetings had their tale of conversions. It was a weird but winsome scene, when the solemn question was put, "Who is on the Lord's side?" and the safety lamps went up, one by one; and when a new lamp was held up, in token of a soul changing sides, it was to the glad music of the far-echoed refrain of hundreds of meetings:

Diolch iddo,
Byth am gofio llwch y llawr!

It was no figure of speech, but the literal fact, that

the horses underground were sensible of the difference which those days made. They were obliged to learn the meaning of a new and milder language than they had been accustomed to. The prayer of Ebenezer Elliot, "The people, Lord, the people!" was so grandly answered then, as to make still more desired the day of its universal answer. "O Lord" —so one framed his petition—"Jesus Christ was born in a stable, and here are we in this old stable underground praying; help us here to pray, as though He were with us now."

Taking them all in all, those were wonderful weeks. To visit any town or village was to meet a fresh surprise. It seemed as if all the churches had assumed their royal priesthood. The man who was mere clod of earth a few weeks before was now fire and bloom: mute voices, in thousands, outsang trained choristers of God. "Obey the Spirit," cried the Lord's messenger, as he passed from crowd to crowd; it reached the loneliest hearth among the snowbound heights, and it returned, not void. Foolishly, perhaps, but yearningly, we look back to those fresh weeks, with their reflection of Galilean tints, and we sigh, "Would we could have kept them, as they were then!" But, "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division."

CHAPTER VI

"THAT DAY"
(December 7, 1904)

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I WILL now come to a concrete personal impression. I was in Liverpool early in December of that year of 1904, and arranged to visit, on my return journey, a district which had been touched simultaneously with the commencement of the mission at Loughor. Indeed, the work of grace had visibly begun earlier. The Free Church mission conducted in the Rhos neighbourhood at the beginning of 1904, by Miss Rosina Davies, had been exceptionally successful; not only in the number of converts added to the different churches, but in the tone of the mission. The impression was deepened and expectancy brightened by a series of revival services in the Baptist church at the end of June and the commencement of July. The impressionist sketch written fresh from my own visit shall here continue the story, rather than any recollection modified by what I have seen and heard since:

Rhos—or, to adorn it with its full Welsh name, Rhosllanerchrugog—is a mining hill-district within some three miles of Wrexham, and now easily reached by motor train or electric car. Irregularly built, thickly populated, on a dull December morning it presented no outward attractions to a visitor. The united prayer-meeting, held in its turn that morning and afternoon in the Baptist chapel, had started before we arrived. When one thought of it in the light of the customary, it felt strange that there should be several ministers and others who had travelled some miles in order to be present at a ten o'clock prayer-meeting on a week-day morning. These prayer-meetings, we were told, held twice each day, and followed by large evening meetings, had been continued for three weeks without a break—from the time of the mission started by the Rev. R. B. Jones, (November 8–18). Mr. Jones was succeeded by the Rev. Hugh Hughes; and this week the Rev. W. W. Lewis, Carmarthen, had taken up the work. Missioners came and went; the prayer-meeting remained.

There was a goodly company present; but the ground floor was by no means full; so that the service was not made by numbers. Yet the moment we were inside the door, we came under an indescribable spell. We silently took our seats;

the people were at the moment waiting in a hush that affected one as the sound of a gentle wind in the twilight of pines; a tear, unbidden and apparently for no reason, stole into the eye. Some one prayed—not "engaged in prayer," but *prayed*. It must be repeated: these people, meeting twice a day for three weeks—like those weeks between the Ascension and Pentecost—had become very intimate with their Saviour. They confided to Him exactly what they most dearly wished, praying for relatives and friends, even for some by name. They pleaded for those who might miss the blessing, though it came so near. Prayer glided imperceptibly—for there was no announcing, or even lifting of the bowed heads—into the singing of a verse of Miss Crosby's hymn, led sweetly by a woman's voice:

Pass me not, O gentle Saviour.

But the Welsh version has a striking variation in the last line but one:

While on others Thou art *smiling*,
Do not pass me by.

And in the refrain, "Saviour, Saviour," is represented by "*Iesu, Iesu.*"

I am finding out that this revival has added something indefinable to the ordinary human voice,

not there usually. I have heard something like it in the voice of a mother speaking of her beloved dead, not in the first sharpness of grief, but in the heavened tranquillity that gradually comes; when grief renounces its regret in part, in order to make room for the rapture of remembering how well the beloved one rests in the deep vales of God's Avilion! Such unison of awe, and affection, and tender sorrow there was in the singing that morning. I had never felt before, I thought, how much music was in the name *Iesu*, as the voice lingered over it in the refrain. And His smile!—all its graciousness came home, for the first time it seemed, in all its redeeming wonder. Nothing mattered in the world except this—"*Pass* me *not*, O gentle Saviour." Scarcely had the sound of "pass me by" gently died away, before another prayer was on its wing. For a moment there was a misgiving: it sounded too whole-hearted—shall I say? He seemed to ask too easily for such grace of life as to be able himself to ask the world in the very words of Christ: "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" It was part of the deep ethical note of this revival. Suddenly the voice changed into that key of sorrowing, rapturous love, as he went on brokenly to say—"No one can say Thou art not kind. I know better. What was I before Thou didst take me up? There is no one any-

where so kind, so gentle, to an old wanderer such as I was—no one anywhere like Jesus Christ. Help me never to dishonour Thy Name." And once more that woman's chastened voice led us in another well-known, exquisitely harmonious hymn, of which this is a translation *pour servir* :

> Lord, in every wish and motion,
> Let my soul be sanctified:
> In my weary, striving spirit
> Let the strength of Heav'n abide:
> Keep me always,
> Lest I wander from Thy side.

And so prayer and hymn followed and mingled, without a single halt or jar. It was as if an Invisible Harper had the string of each soul ready to His finger, awaking the finest music at His touch, and making it fade again to hushed expectancy. Anything more orderly, more harmonious, than that unconducted meeting I can scarcely conceive.

Two or three spoke: they had news of the revival in other places ; a prayer-meeting at Wrexham the previous evening ; a Sunday evening service at Aberystwyth ; Colwyn Bay—Bangor—Nantlle : they were all telegraphic sentences. One reported a children's prayer-meeting in his district : he proceeded smoothly, until he tried to repeat his own child's simple prayer—"Lord, help us to

be good children, and live to thy praise"—and then no more from him, except a half sob. But—

Speak, in all Thy might and glory,
Speak, O Lord, this very hour:
Let Thy voice be all-victorious,
Yea, let none withstand its power:
Spread and shine, Fire divine,
Make this place entirely Thine!

The last two lines were repeated, time after time, and then suddenly, but with joyous effect, that sister's voice led in a changed refrain (to the same tune)—

Frodyr dewch, llawenhewch,
Diolchwch iddo, byth na thewch!
(Brethren, raise hymns of praise,
Bless Him, thank Him—all your days!)

Then a missionary plea was put in, earnestly and effectively. Could we allow ourselves to enjoy these choice blessings, and view the perishing world with indifference? What if the churches of the country had for the last generation given such free course to the Spirit, as they were giving these brief weeks, would the heathen world be where it was to-day? Surely a host of missionaries would be born of this awakening! Then we returned to prayer again; and although the speaking was to the point, and in perfect keeping with the spirit of the service, somehow the return

to prayer always meant an open door into the inmost sanctuary. Several women had taken part—one of them now, with her own heartache in every syllable, and her joyful resignation to God's will. Think of a prayer-meeting in which thanks was humbly given for "the *blessing* of ill-health." But they had found a Friend, who carried their infirmities, as another of their refrains, sung at first almost in a whisper—

> Oh, the Lamb, the gentle Lamb,
> The Lamb of Calvary:
> The Lamb that was slain is living now,
> To intercede for me!

I had heard it, to its sweet minor setting, scores of times; but what was it that morning that revealed the Lamb's infinite gentleness—*yr addfwyn Oen*—as it had never been revealed before? What was it that made his "living now" so absolutely certain, so overpoweringly real? Nearly a week has gone between that morning and the time of writing these words: and yet I feel now as I felt then, that something was won and possessed in that service which it would be worth crossing a continent any day to get possession of. What was previously faith is now assurance.

Perhaps it would be well to add—lest some one

should be misled to think that it acts by a sort of sacred magic—that the meetings inexplicably vary. Several who had been at previous meetings said that they had never felt at the others what all of us seemed to have experienced that morning. Indeed, the afternoon meeting, though in ordinary seasons it would be called exceptional, missed that indefinable something of the morning—the morning on the Mount. The crowded evening meeting had more volume of thrill, naturally, and was in itself a memorable scene. And yet, some who had come a long distance for the afternoon and evening services were partly disappointed. To them the day had not become a memory for a life-time—like the reminiscence of an Alpine afterglow, recalled on lowering days, with the assurance that it will be there again, some near or far eventide. It was another form of Wordsworth's experience

> Tho' inland far we be,
> Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
> Which brought us hither.

In the whole service there was little of what may be properly called excitement. There was no shouting; indeed, if I remember rightly, we did not rise once to sing. It seemed to be prayer from first to last: the form varied—speech, song, supplication; but it was all prayer. An effectual prayer, without a

doubt. Dozens, personally prayed for, have come, as God's answer, and given themselves to Christ during these three weeks. That very afternoon, when the invitation was given, a father gave himself to the Saviour, whose son had been praying for him the previous week in the very same pew. Let not those who watch from a distance be misled: this revival is not a mere outburst of emotionalism, of worked-up excitement, and sometimes blazing into extravagances: unhappily, it is not, and could not well be, in every single instance, without these. But the true revival, which is lifting thousands of souls and changing visibly thousands of lives, is born and fed in unrecorded prayer-meetings, in a nation's wistfulness for God. "Who brought the revival to you?" was the question once, during a fruitful season, asked of an old minister, now passed away. "No one," he replied: "*we* got revived." That is what is happening to-day, increasingly, throughout Wales. No one can tell where it may end: Wales—England—Scotland—Ireland—the whole wide world? Why not? It can be had, wherever men and women are prepared to give themselves, with one accord, to prayer.

So far the sketch of "that day," as written at the time. But it was incomplete. The crowning

scene of all was yet to follow, later in the evening. When the congregation was tested, all being hushed into anxious expectancy, a man made his way slowly along the densely filled aisle, towards the pulpit pew. When he was recognised there was a thrill of joy not quite free from fear. They knew him as one of the most notorious characters of the whole district, a pugilist of no light form, and leader of a gang of thirteen. Could it be that he was among the captives of Christ that day ? or was he in drink, and about to disturb the solemn proceedings ? Another moment, and there was no doubt. Disturb the proceedings he did—in a soul's grand way returning from the furthest boundary of the far country to the Father's House. They saw the face, stained with perspiration and tears, and, at the first glance, more terrifying than usual; but there was a gleam of new life upon it. "None of you will ever know," he began, in a voice part shout, part sob, "what I have passed through to-night. I have wept a pool of tears where I have been sitting, and they were the gladdest tears I ever knew. The agony before that !—my head seemed to swell and swell, as if it would at last burst. But it grew easier when the tears came. You all know me: you know for whom I have fought; but I am changing sides to-night, to fight on the side of Jesus." And he kept his word. The next evening he was marching

with the soldiers of the Cross, inviting others to the services ; night after night he was appealing to his old "pals" specially, and praying for them with an earnestness that melted all hearts. I can this moment recall, in all its freshness, the joy of the bringer of good news, and my own joy in receiving it, when a few weeks later I was told, at the close of an address on the Revival in the Central Hall, Manchester : "You will be glad to hear that he has now brought in the last of the gang of thirteen!" He is still on the Saviour's side, fighting valiantly. Like a good soldier, he is furnishing his mind as well as his heart ; and his remarks at many a society meeting reveal a knowledge of the Bible and of doctrinal theology which show that before the evil years some gentle hand had led him, and some faithful voice had taught him.

What I wrote eighteen months ago, in the vividness of the event, I re-write in the precious softer light of memory : it was a day worth travelling anywhere to possess. Far through the years its holy flame shall continue to shine—"the goodwill of Him that dwelt in the bush." Meeting a visitor, who had seen many lands and tasted the gladness of faith under many helpful conditions, but who testified that he had never experienced such exquisite joy as here, during the past few days, I

remarked to him: "But you know no Welsh, and you cannot therefore understand prayer or hymn?" "No, I cannot understand, but I *comprehend* all." And I believe thousands of visitors will confirm the testimony. For there is a speech of the soul more lucid than words. And the people of Wales could use it during those months.

CHAPTER VII

CHRISTMAS MESSENGERS

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CHRISTMAS MESSENGERS

WAS there ever such a Christmastide in Wales as that of 1904? It was more completely possessed by the Babe of the manger than ever known before. Thousands of children learnt the meaning of a "merry Christmas" for the first time in their life. Fathers were not drunk, mothers did not weep, little ones did not go without food. Men who had not been sober at Christmas for years—any number up to twenty years and beyond—laughed with the laughter of their happy boys and girls, and then wondered why they had not laughed before, and turned from laughter to unbidden tears, and again to laughter. "I want you to get me a linen shirt," said one of these, a miner, to his wife, a few days before the morn that recalls the singing of angels. "A linen shirt?" she asked incredulously: for flannel was all they had been able to afford—scantily—hitherto. "Yes": there was to be a tea-meeting for the converts at the chapel on Christmas

Day, and he had been asked to help in cutting bread and butter. "And I must have linen to do that—for Jesus Christ." What dawn of reverence, in a soul hitherto clouded, was now struggling as through shadows of death into heaven's fresh morning!

No one will ever know what healing that Christmastide brought to many a mother's sore heart. "I am going for my holidays," confessed a young man, son of a minister, to a friend whose prayers had helped to win him to Christ; "and I am ashamed to think that it is the first time for years that my home-going will make my parents happy." Then one recalls a kindred picture in a far-off district. While night after night converts were being enrolled, a mother, physically unable to attend the services, kept watch on the doorstep for some friendly passer-by to bring the news. And they would give her the list, many of them forgetting what secret longing lay behind her question; occasionally one would remember her prodigal child and would finish the list saying: "But perhaps others came after I left." And from her lonely vigil she would return to the house night after night, to take up her burden of intercession. It was almost to the ringing of Christmas bells that a neighbour, touched with the feeling of her sorrowing watch, thoughtfully came, and beginning

the list broke off suddenly: "And your boy's name was among them to-night." He would have walked many a longer mile to see the light that came into the worn face—at last. It was the shining of the star of Bethlehem.

But the joy of that Christmas flowed wider still. Thousands of young people coming home brought with them the kindling they had themselves felt, or came into affected areas and carried it back with them. School-teachers in scores of instances became evangelists. All Wales meets in Glamorganshire. The labourer, driven from the land in quest of daily bread, finds his way to this rich coal-field; the quarryman, exiled through labour disputes, comes southward to re-start life, home-sick for his mountains wherever he wanders. The return takes place at the holidays. For better, for worse, Glamorganshire affects every corner of Wales, north and south. It was for better, that Christmas. Men who were before professing Christians were now evangelists; and men who had notorious fame hitherto as the curse of their homes, returned as missionaries.

Take, for instance, the story of the revival as it was in part related and in part seen by me, the first week of the New Year, at a picturesquely situated village eight miles from a railway station, nestling in the shadows of the hills, with more commanding

peaks from the distance overlooking. A few anglers and tourists have discovered it, and disturb its placid course in holiday time ; otherwise its dreams are in the key of old traditions and mountain silences. Shepherds and farmers and rural craftsmen form the bulk of the inhabitants.

Here, as elsewhere, the young men began to "see visions," and about a month before Christmas prayer-meetings were started. At first the young men held theirs separately from the young women's ; for in the latter case, and mostly in the former, it was a case of taking public part for the first time. Night after night they met and encouraged each other ; then a united meeting was held, and over the quiet village, and up the many valleys that open out on many sides, a sense of wonder came. The first week passed, and the second ; and, as in the case of Elijah's lad looking towards the sea, each evening they were almost compelled to say : "There is nothing." But the end of the third week brought the cloud. What mystic power and sign of the Spirit are hidden in this period of three weeks ! As already mentioned, it was the measure of time in several other districts.

A young man had now come home for his holidays from one of the mining valleys of Glamorganshire. He had been home before, as some boon companions pleasantly remembered. They were expecting a

good time—on the old lines. But what change had passed over him? His first evening was not spent in the village inn, but in the village chapel. Nor will that first evening be soon forgotten. He was but illiterate at the best, and his lips had grown unfamiliar with prayer. But he prayed as no one there had heard before. At first there was much curiosity; and among those who had not been at the meeting, the news was received as the news of Saul by the disciples at Jerusalem. Such a ring-leader of drink and dissipation could not have been so suddenly changed! But his new life had made him patient and forgiving. He not only told his tale and prayed as evening succeeded evening —prayed for his companions one by one—but also went to search them out. On a small scale, Evan Roberts had come to this secluded northern village.

When I reached there the first Friday of the New Year, there was scarcely an unconverted hearer to be found all through those valleys. Between him, and the young people already equipped by their three weeks of prayer, and the ministers—young also—the gleanings were few. When two old men at the evening meeting (announced as lecture and converted into a revival service) remained to give themselves to Christ—with one or two more from a distance—the tale of the winning

of souls in that district was all but completed. His old companions had *had* a good time—on new lines.

And the young man ? He told God in his prayer how sorry he was that he did not know more in order to speak better ; but he was doing his best, and would try to learn ! I believe it was ungrammatical enough to shock critical ears, its colloquialism was at times almost disconcerting ; but it was prayer, if ever a heart came into direct communication with God.

Twelve months ago he had come home with something like £11 in his pocket ; he had wasted them all, and had to borrow £1 to take him back to South Wales. Is it any wonder that he used hard words in speaking of his old master—the devil ? or that his voice grew very gentle when he spoke of his new Master ? The humbleness of the efficient instruments is among the miracles of this revival. Next morning, as I left in the dawning light, I felt God's poetry in the hills and shadowy peaks ; but I had found greater poetry by far in the soul of a young collier, who had come all the way home this Christmastide to help in saving his own kith and kin.

The other illustration requires to be given with its preface. Among those driven from Bethesda through the lock-out was one who had lived a reckless life, now at home, now wandering in Scotland or Lancashire, in search of work and change.

This time, he had found his way to Glamorganshire ; and when the revival began, he was attracted in spite of himself to some of the meetings. He wondered at good people so losing themselves, and was comparatively undisturbed until he found himself at a service where Dan Roberts—the Revivalist's brother—spoke. Then began an inward conflict, which only a Bunyan could have thoroughly understood and pictured. He would have left the meeting without a sign, but for the conviction that more than one prayer that night were for him personally, and also that on the way out he was arrested by two Christian workers, who had been silently, prayerfully watching him. They brought him back with them, and he was reckoned among the converts.

But dark days and sleepless nights followed, torn with remorse and contrition. If only he could escape from men, and in some secure solitude cry out to God the pent-up anguish of his heart ! He journeyed by train, intending to drown his misery in drink. He reached the public-house, took but a taste of drink, and felt constrained to return again by train. His family were at Bethesda ; he was living in lodgings, with no chance of being alone. He climbed the mountain, but men were continually coming and going. He went down to the riverside, but the noise of its current was not

loud enough to let him shout to his riven heart's content. He was taking a night-turn in the mine, when he had to follow his work in a lonelier part than usual. Only another and he were employed near together. He had fits of physical shivering during his conflict, and his companion that night noticed him in one of these. "What is the matter?" he asked. "I can't tell," was the dismal reply. "I tell you what it is, William Hughes," said his companion, who was a humble but true man of God, "the Holy Spirit has got hold of you." "Perhaps," he wearily answered.

His companion had to go away, but felt loth to leave him in that state: he told him he would return as soon as possible. To the sufferer, it was like the sound of an opening prison-door heralding liberty. At last he would be alone! He waited with fear and trembling, as the solitary footstep died away in the hollow distance; then he glanced quickly in every direction, but no sound gave him any dread. He entered the familiar "man-hole"—the miner's place of refuge from the coal-trucks passing—and he felt as if the air were thick with his own curses of bygone days. Then with a cry and shout, as if his whole nature were being rent, he prayed for God's mercy and help. And as he cried, he felt as if a physical burden were being lifted from him, borne on slow, strong

wings through the roof of the mine, and away for ever. The worst of the conflict was over in that one tremendous moment. Tears came, but their bitterness was gone; songs came, with or without words, but all-triumphant.

He hastened away to his northern home, and arrived—sober. His wife had been advised—but was it not too good to be true? And the children's surprise! Within a few minutes of reaching home—the little family as if all in a dream, he himself wildest dreamer of all!—he was trying to pray in his children's hearing, for the first time. He had demurred at first to his wife's request, but when she knelt on the hearth and led the way, he followed. And they went together to Bethesda Chapel that night; and perhaps he would not have taken part but for his wife's quiet urging.

What followed has become public history in Wales. He too became the evangelist of his kindred in the quarried hills. During the days that followed, far into the New Year, this workman's house was a surgery of wounded souls. The worst of the sin-smitten ones seemed to find their way intuitively to him, and he was every day in search of them. Long past midnight, many a time, he was praying old companions out of remorse and despair into the marvellous light of redeeming Love.

In no language, from no lips, have I heard anything that thrills heart and soul more than his way at times of shouting the one word—*Diolch* ! (Thanks). It is his shout of thanksgiving and victory. I have felt as if in it I caught something—an echo at least—of what fell on John's ear from the redeemed hosts, " as the voice of many waters." The months have come and gone, another Christmas has also passed, and he is still on the pilgrim's way, learning new lessons and sowing fresh seed. He is making up for wasted years by a constant study of the Bible, having since that first Christmas committed hundreds of its verses to memory.

I have selected these two for illustration. Let these be multiplied by at least scores, and it will be partly understood how Christ Himself kept Christmas in Wales in 1904. Sweeter far than chimes of bells were the refrains swelling in the valleys, passing over the hills, now of " Throw out the life-line," now of " Tell mother I'll be there," mingling with many a native hymn. Evan Roberts had given " Never lose sight of Jesus " as his farewell message on the eve of Christmas.

Such days—such a golden season—do not appear too often in Time's iron course. Perhaps we are tempted to think, amidst their glow, that there has never been their like before. Happily,

this is not so. "A time of merriment and gladness, of joy and exultation, of praise and rejoicing"—reads like a record of that season: "and men sang songs of praise to God; gentle and simple, burghers and country folk, young men and maidens, old and young, with one accord. . . . And they sang God's songs, not man's, and all walked in the way of salvation." Is this written of Wales, A.D. 1904–5? Not so: the date of it was 1233, in sunny Italy, when the "Alleluia Revival" gladdened the whole land. And so, in other lands yet, in days near or far off, shall such days of heaven suddenly, inexplicably, adorn some unknown year.

PART III

TRIALS OF HARVESTING

CHAPTER I

A GLAD NEW YEAR

CHAPTER I

A GLAD NEW YEAR

How the New Year came in, with what received gains, with what prospective hopes, will perhaps best be told by giving the writer's own experience, drawn from its first fortnight. Its first day was a Sunday, and its last. The week of prayer affected many churches and localities, which until then had been but slightly touched. Here in London, among the Welsh churches, the return of thousands of young people from their brief Christmas visit home helped to make the first Sunday of the New Year a day of great expectations. Nor were we disappointed. Usually, owing to the congregations being so widely scattered, the week of prayer had not been observed, except in a few churches. But that Sunday compelled the week to be kept, and this was followed by other weeks, and even months, night after night in unbroken sequence.

From London we pass to a church in the heart of rural Wales. The village, so-called, has but a scant half-dozen houses; the boundaries of the church reach a distance of about three miles in every direction. On Sunday the visiting preacher had related some incidents of the revival among the miners; this led to a prayer-meeting being called for Monday morning. The quietness of the hills was upon the people as they gathered one by one, and it is doubtful if more than two or three anticipated anything other than of their usual, quiet services. But there were a few on whose soul, in the night watches, an air, not from those wintry hills, had breathed. But it was on the whole a staid congregation, accustomed to move among religious duties in the same accepted fashion, year in, year out. Yet within an hour of their assembling everything was transformed. These self-contained people had abandoned themselves to God's Spirit.

What had brought it about? As far as any visible explanation goes, just the fact of two women, who had gone in and out among them from childhood to the eve of middle age, silently—these two, this morning, coming forward, uncalled, to lead in prayer. Did the unexpectedness produce the pathos of it? Or is it that everywhere the real unveiling of a soul is the greatest incident, for that

moment, in the wide creation? Silently men wept, not knowing why; indifferent hearts were melted; songs became sobs, and sobs again returned to songs. A mere outburst of emotion? Ah! but there are scores of people in that district who have never been the same since that New Year's week. To the time of my writing these words, during the space of nearly two years, that first inspiration has not once exhausted itself. Some of the regenerations have been wonderful beyond telling, not so much morally as intellectually. The previous conduct was fairly becoming, but earthy. Suddenly the clod caught fire, and the flame shines to-day with brighter light than ever. Here a labourer of the fields has been "caught up," as veritably, if not as loftily, as Paul; he has seen visions. He has seen himself, as with actual eyes, in the Judgment Day; he has seen the Ten Commandments written out in beautiful letters and lines, and then has been compelled to look upon his own letters and lines, blurred and crooked—and his very soul in the darkness of night has shuddered! A man of one talent, I confess; but the one talent bears to-day Bunyan's stamp, though it is not likely that he has read a page of Bunyan.

Again we move, and are among the northern quarries. An incident of the autumn weeks leads

up to our New Year's week. When the young men decided to start their own prayer crusade, they were taken aback to find at the chapel door a mother in Israel, past her eightieth year, waiting to enter. They wanted to be alone, unaccustomed to public prayer as most of them were. But she prevailed on them to let her come in and sit near the door, while they grouped themselves together near the pulpit. The meeting haltingly proceeded, some being a little more practised than others, but all of them shy and afraid. At last one who had never before made the attempt commenced, but after two or three broken, blurred sentences speech failed him. There was for a while troubled silence, and the meeting might have ended in failure, but for a voice from the door, affectionate and comforting, calling the young man by his everyday name—"Don't give up, lad!" He failed to respond, but others then came to the rescue. A few evenings later, he was again praying, having gained good ground, and before he closed he thanked God for the old mother who had encouraged him the first night. It is she who enters into my recollections of that first week, when present at preaching services in the neighbourhood. At the close of the sermon in the afternoon a veteran of eighty-five years rose to give out a hymn. He prefaced it by exultant thanks: "I have seen the revival of

1839—of 1849—of 1859, but thank God that I have seen this also in 1905 before going home."

The first portion of the verse he gave out consists of question and answer, thus translated :

Hark ! what trumpet now is sounding ?
'Tis the King of Shiloh's call !
Who are to the feast invited ?
Mortal sinners, one and all !
Homeward turn, O wand'ring children,
Leave the husks, why longer roam ?
Hark ! to day the King still calling,
Prodigals, come home, come home !

When he had recited the first line he paused to expound it, and illustrate the use of the trumpet in the Bible. But before he had concluded his exposition of the line, apparently the patience of his comrade in years failed, for she anticipated him to reply jubilantly :

'Tis the King of Shiloh's call !

Being somewhat deaf, he did not hear her, so he repeated the line himself in good time, and then went on with the third line, again expounding. But she had tasted joy, and so was now ready with the reply :

Mortal sinners, one and all !

Then, by some happy means—would we fear to

call it the power of the Invisible Leader ?—the two joined together, half to sing, half to recite, the great appeal of the last four lines. The effect of this unrehearsed episode was indescribable and unforgettable. Two pilgrims, as from the threshold of the Father's door, had turned round before entering, to invite the wanderers home. Before 1905 closed she had crossed the threshold—singing. Her deathbed was a concert of praise ; her voice, restored to something of its youthful freshness, could be heard far across the fields. She died singing the song of Gethsemane and Calvary's Hill, with its tender closing appeal :

> What tongue from his praise can refrain,
> What heart but shall melt at His love !

From the north, back into Glamorganshire again. It was on a cold, dry morning that I found myself with many more wending our way to the place where Evan Roberts was expected to be. There was no need for strangers to ask the way ; they had but to follow the stream of people, eager in walk and face. We learnt on the way what great work had already been done in the various churches. Evan Roberts was coming there, as elsewhere now, not to initiate, but to crown, local effort. The morning service was proceeding when we entered

a well-filled chapel. The meeting belonged to no one; it belonged to all. There were few—that morning scarcely any—addresses, but prayers and songs in both languages abounded. Now it was the Welsh version of

Saw ye my Saviour?

Later it was,

When I survey the wondrous cross,

sung to the tune of "Rockingham" as I had never heard it before. A daughter of the revival of 1859–60—now a mother in Israel—sang some old-world carol, saying with simple pathos before she began: "I could sing forty years ago; I want to try again to-day—this great day!" And forty years were as a day when she brought back the lost song of another season of God. Here is an English prayer, without an accent to betray the speaker; but strangely enough, as he proceeds, he gets into the melody of the Welsh *hwyl*, unmistakable, and in perfect tune. I felt mystified; was it the atmosphere that had captured him, or what? As he went on, the secret modestly betrayed itself: "Oh, I thank Thee, Lord, I thank Thee, for leading me back to my father's native land to catch the sacred fire!" Whatever he had lost through his English bringing-up and life-long environment, that day some invisible hand found

the ancestral instinct deep in his nature, and tuned it to perfect melody.

But what is this voice from the gallery—rough, untutored, surely unacquainted with the dialect of prayer ? There is no need to ask ; every sentence is a confession of an evil past and a redeeming present. It was not surprising to hear that he had been the terror of the Vale until some few days ago. To-day Christ leads His captive in triumph—His rejoicing captive ! Mark one phrase of his prayer : " O God, Thou art driving the chariot of salvation through this place to-day ; don't drive too easy, Lord, drive slow ; remember there are some, like myself, that can't get on if it drives too fast."

The morning service scarcely concluded at all ; people left for some light refreshment, but hurried back again for the next service—overcrowded long before the usual hour. It conducted itself. One could not help feeling it was slightly marred by a sense of excitement ; Evan Roberts would enter any moment. He stole in quietly and was in the pulpit before almost any one knew. And still the chain of prayer continued. Somewhere a lull came ; the evangelist began to speak ; simple, sober words on man as God's creature, and his reasonable service to his Creator. During the short address there was no manifestation on the part of the audience,

except that one occasionally detected in the tense silence the sound of a short, deep sigh. Once again the audience took up its part. Then somewhere came the strains—to the tune of "Sandon"—of Newman's hymn,

> Lead, kindly Light, amid th' encircling gloom,
> Lead Thou me on

It was sung triumphantly—too triumphantly for the spirit of the words, but not for the spirit of the place. Surely there were many present that afternoon who will never meet again until the perfect morn shines on "the moor and fen, the crag and torrent," which they shall have left far behind! About a month later I heard the same hymn sung by a congregation of kneeling students—wistfully sung, almost whispered throughout. The hymn was more at home there in every way. But the Spirit can tune His instrument as He will. "Ye shall have a song, as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept."

Such a meeting, such a service—how came it to be? For this was manifestly not the source of the revival, but the result of it. It was the flood, wide and shining in the light; what streams fed it? I found part of the answer next morning, in the same county, but in another of its many valleys. Everything was such a contrast to the day described.

It was a small school vestry that held the few—some thirty, perhaps—who had come together for prayer. It was announced as a women's meeting, or to translate literally the kindlier Welsh name—the "*Sisters*' Meeting." But a few of us men found our way into the place. There was here a hush upon prayer and song ; one sister after another prayed in awed whisperings, yet quite audible—and such prayers ! Then came an indescribable moment ; how, I cannot tell. Was it the singing of that hymn—already referred to—the hymn of Gethsemane, and "the moanings at midnight outpoured" ?

But then that hymn was often sung, both before and after, without producing all *that*. No, it must remain part of the Spirit's "viewless way." There cannot be many hours in life like that hour, or part of an hour, that followed. It was the spiritual world realised, actualised—to be partly lost again in the world's wintry breath, but never irrecoverably lost. These, surely, are the "angel faces" lost awhile ; they shall return with the morn, smiling. And the smile will mean—chidingly, but sweetly—"O ye of little faith !" When that little meeting was over, and when I thought that there were hundreds like it, morning or afternoon or both, all over the country, I knew the hidden sources, the unnamed tributaries of the revival

were here. Our crowded meetings, with their full-grown fervour and joy, were daily and hourly fed from these. The dew of Hermon—far-off, unseen Hermon—came down "upon the mountains of Zion."

CHAPTER II

PROGRESS THROUGH TRIALS

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PROGRESS THROUGH TRIALS

THE Acts of the Apostles is at the same time one of the gladdest and one of the saddest books in the world: its light is the sunshine of Divine Grace, its gloom is the darkness of human sin. The glow of its Pentecost, as of a white peak among the track of stars, makes deeper the noisome shadows that lie around its base. And every Pentecostal season, from that age to this, has brought in its train trials and disappointments. The conflict between old and new, the extravagance of fresh emotion and the tyranny of new experience, jealousy—they have never been absent from any great revival and reformation: they are part of the proving, cleansing fire, used of God to establish His righteousness.

Early in the New Year trials came and grew. At one meeting there were painful scenes caused by the challenge of two or three agnostics. They defied the meeting to bring about their conversion. Evan Roberts was sufficiently instructed in the mysteries

of the Kingdom of Heaven to know that no such foolish challenge could be accepted. He made no attempt to argue; he gave himself to prayer on their behalf, and constrained the whole congregation into prayer with him. But the challengers remained unmoved, publicly defiant. The scene of anguish became almost intolerable; and the meeting closed with an aching sense of failure. But he soon recovered himself, accepting the incident as part of his personal discipline, and testing of the people's courage and patience.

His general methods were becoming more sharply marked, his clairvoyant expressions more definite and more frequent. He was more and more given to locate hindrances at his meetings, and almost to name the hinderers. It was the growth of these practices that led to some most unhappy incidents, both by way of attack and defence. There was a good deal of irresponsible writing, on both sides, mostly by anonymous correspondents. One could wish that the whole chapter were blotted out. But that cannot be; for it led to a good deal of denominational suspicion and jealousy, which is only now showing signs of abating. It is pleasant to add that in the midst of this dark sea of strife he himself remained calm and firm, never once pausing to answer anything or any one. Whether his methods commend themselves or not, his very deafness to

the clamour around him proved him to be of those who may well be called the Lord's deaf messengers —deaf to everything but the one Voice.

But the strain of the succeeding weeks must have been intense, physically and spiritually. He went on, day by day, through thronging multitudes, alternating from grief to rapture, often within a few brief hours. Then came the dramatic break, when he suddenly stopped his crusade, and passed into his strange "week of silence." During those days he buried himself from the world, commanded into silence, as he declared, by His Lord.

Hitherto he had confined himself to one county, practically—the county whose population outnumbers all the rest of Wales. His instrument had been for the most part its masses of miners, warm-hearted, proverbially quick-witted. But when he resumed his ministry, it was among his fellow-countrymen in Liverpool. Here again a few untoward incidents have served to divert attention, and produce a false impression of the whole. At one meeting he complained of an attempt to hypnotise him; and the complaint was well-grounded; but many felt that in publishing it, the greatness of the meeting, as an instrument for saving souls, was marred. On another occasion he referred to hinderers present, not only among the audience, but

among the ministers on the platform. Naturally, it produced an air of suspicion, in which all were more all less involved; and this led to a public protest. One of the finest meetings of young people ever held in the city ended in a mere sensational report. These and one or two other incidents so hit the public mind, and have so monopolised popular recollection, that the other meetings—some of them as exquisite in procedure and influence as any held, north or south—are almost forgotten or entirely ignored.

Were the narative left barely so, it would leave an impression of personal caprice; and that would be unjust. To understand the revivalist in reference to those marred meetings, one must know something of his standpoint. When a minister, in another district, was urging him to visit a meeting where he was expected, he continuing his refusal, the minister said: "The meeting will be utterly spoilt." "That may be quite necessary," was his quiet reply. One can see that, almost if not quite from the first, he set out with no purpose of having what are usually called successful meetings: it might be necessary to spoil a meeting to save the cause. No doubt, the atmosphere of mere curiosity, that increased as he went, helped to make him the "Silent Evangelist" he often became. Consciously or unconsciously he became a disciple of

the teacher on the banks of the river Chebar, who was made to the people a sign of God, speechless but awe-inspiring. His attitude recalls John Wesley's paradox: "I believe it pleased God to bless the first sermon most because it gave most offence."

The partial arrest of the revival, in its first form, was due to another cause also. When he began he was the very symbol of spontaneity, each day seemed to dawn with its own fresh call, each meeting to create its own fresh programme. He was just himself, and no one and nothing else. This had its peril as well as its strength. When he left the south, he became more and more a follower of rule and programme. Possibly this was, in the end, for the best. But the original freshness, as Francis of Assisi sadly learnt, could not be preserved in harder moulds. While he heroically, if sometimes erringly, trusted his own direct spiritual promptings, he was the revivalist of the first glad months among the miners: when he partly left these, there was another air. And this seems to be still more true of his more recent development. We are not prepared to pass final judgment upon this: possibly, no judgment is permissible, but that of the Last Assize. But it is evident that the spontaneous breathings of heart and spirit, which made old

truths fresh as the first daisies of spring, have given way to the meditations of the schools.

From Liverpool he went, after a period of rest, to Anglesey, the isle of John Elias and Christmas Evans. Apart from Holyhead, the country is purely agricultural. Here in the brightness of June days and the golden stillness of June evenings, sometimes in sight of the sea, oftener still in sight of the heights of Snowdon, thousands upon thousands gathered, and made the open field sacred ground with prayers and psalms, with confessions and conversions. The sound of those meetings has re-echoed among the Alps, and on the banks of the Rhine, and indeed to the ends of the earth. "Send me a Welsh grammar," was the request of a Swiss visitor, on his return home, after charmed days of Welsh prayer and hymn, of *Bendigedig*! (Blessed) and *Diolch iddo*! (Praise His name). Such days are not to be estimated altogether by the feelings experienced in them, the conversions made in them; their resounding echo, in far-off recesses of the earth, in the deep futures of time—as of thunder reverberating among the hollows of great mountains—is part of their power and worth.

The Anglesey mission closed, he turned southward to Bala.

CHAPTER III

THE INTERPRETER'S HOUSE

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Bala is a small country town, encircled by mountains and hills which are mirrored in its beautiful lake. But it is its intimate association with the growth of Free Church life in Wales that enhances its picturesqueness, and promotes it to be a sacred name to all pious hearts. From the days of Howell Harris and Thomas Charles to the days of Dr. Lewis Edwards and his son, Dr. Thomas Charles Edwards, a thousand memories cluster round the name. To its "Green," in the early years of Methodism, great congregations came from all parts of Wales for festivals of preaching. It was fitting that Evan Roberts should come here, of all places: he came July 5. All through the winter months, among the students in the Theological College, and among all the churches, great scenes had been witnessed, great experiences had been won.

He had come from meetings in the Pavilion at

Carnarvon, where many thousands had gathered together ; next day he would again face thousands on the Green. But this Wednesday evening was given to the students, and a number of invited friends, in the College. He gave an address, and then submitted to be questioned.

Before he began his address, those present joined in the Lord's Prayer. He told them how its simple phrases banished his fear and made him feel at home among them. He related a personal experience, of how he had received one of the strongest impulses of his life through one of its petitions. He and four others, some eight years ago, were standing on a bare mountain summit, when the words " Thy Kingdom come " took such possession of him as to master him completely. He gave other autobiographical incidents, dwelling particularly on that night when he first seemed to be swept into space, face to face with God. He partly lost this joy, in leaving home for school. Why ? He found out the reason : it was because in the delight of communion, he was withdrawing from man. If we become strange to man, we will also become strange to God : because man, of anything on earth, is likest God. Let them be sure that God exists—and the devil also. The devil had come to him—unrecognised at first—during these last months, telling him that he was unworthy to be engaged

in so great a work, and advising him to give it up. He had almost come to believe it was God's voice, until he remembered that a good master never frightens his servant. "And the higher you rise in the spiritual life, the harder will the conflict prove, and the more difficult it will be to distinguish between the two voices: the devil makes his voice so like God's. Once I had saved some money, and refused to give it at the Spirit's bidding. But at last I found strength to obey; and oh! the joy afterwards—oh! it was blessed: it was Heaven." And as he spoke, the speaker's face grew radiant—as many remember it, when in his happy moods at crowded meetings.

He went on to treat of obedience to the Spirit. The Spirit's baptism is worth the giving up, not only of wrong things, but of doubtful things, for its sake. But we shall not taste its worth by ascending occasionally to view heavenly things: we must make our home there. The Spirit never rewards idleness: He shakes it. When they have obeyed and won the reward, the devil will tempt them to reap the praise for themselves. "He has so come to me; but when he offers me the glory, I transfer it to God, and say, 'Praise His Name!' So he has tired of coming to me, because each time he was laden with the burdens of God's glory." He explained that God could be glorified by means of

a hard meeting. "I found the cause of failure at one place to be this: the minister was anxious for a successful service, not for Christ's sake, but for the chapel's credit. . . . Once in a railway train, I found myself shut in with ungodly companions. The Spirit gave me a message, and strength to deliver it. Yet my words were no sooner spoken than I was mocked, and the Spirit wounded. But the Spirit is willing to be wounded, if it sets our conscience at peace."

The address, it will be divined, was in no sense formal: it was the fresh outpouring of his heart, not without pleasant touches of humour. "If the Spirit can so use me, who only spent six weeks at school," he asked them in closing, "what can He not do through you, who are in college for six years!"

Then came questions from the students and others. Replying to an inquiry as to doubtful things, he defined them as what in any sense came between their souls and heaven. For instance, he had been asked to denounce smoking: but he would not. If the habit disturbed any one's communion with heaven, he ought to give it up by all means; but those who felt no disturbing sense were free. "Do not think that you will be entirely rid of sin in this life even after the baptism of the Spirit. Self will persist; you can never shake hands

with self, and bid it good-bye. Nevertheless, there are things that must clearly be given up at once."

Sometimes a preacher felt that he loved Jesus, at other times, there was no such feeling: in the latter state, would he be fit to preach? "Yes," replied the young interpreter unhesitatingly: "we cannot always feel intensely, or there would be no room for faith. Thank God for emotion, but emotion is not everything. A traveller from a hilltop may see the far-off city; but to reach it he must descend into the hollow, and lose sight of it; he will even grow tired, disheartened perhaps. But if he keeps his face towards it, each step of the weary miles will bring him nearer it. Even in the hollow he is nearer it, than he was on the hilltop."

Should one use every opportunity of rebuking sin? He would reply by asking: Are we ready to obey the Spirit's impulse? Even then, the Spirit may not give us permission to speak. There is such a thing as this: "Live religion, and you will force it into a man; speak religion, and you will force it out of him." He would ask them, in dealing with the unsaved, to beware of showing that they came to them to win a battle.

What about Bible-reading? When not inclined to read it, should it be done as a matter of duty? He replied that the Bible is sometimes read, because we are hungry; at other times, in order to feel hungry.

When there is a break in a prayer-meeting, no one apparently being moved to take part, should ministers or others hasten to the rescue ? " By no means : the break may be the best element in the meeting, to make the people sensible of their responsibility. If you are sensible of your own, remain silent, that others may also feel theirs. If you are moved to pray, but feel that there is a taint of self in the desire, do not pray in public, but in secret. It is blasphemy to attempt to create *hwyl* in a religious service." To another, who said that recently he had the strange experience of losing himself entirely in communion with God at prayer-meetings, and who asked if this experience was to be welcomed or otherwise, he replied cryptically by asking—" Have you, dear brother, prayed for common sense ? "

So for two hours the audience were kept in the interpreter's house. To many of them he became another man than they had known and heard in vast gatherings. Sometimes his words there had led them to mimimise the range of his intellectual if not his spiritual equipment. But those two hours, and the narrative of them afterwards, compelled many to revise their estimate of the man. Possibly too, when carefully reconsidered, they will be found to contain some premonitions of his later development—his passing into long-continued

silence, and his insistence more and more on the repression not only of self, but even of emotion. This was specially marked in his messages at the Llandrindod Convention this summer, and at the mission services that followed. His one burden was the death of self through the Cross : he was not satisfied that he had sufficiently exalted the Cross, even at the height of the revival, or sufficiently crucified self ; and as emotion proved fruitful soil for self, it also must be repressed. Was it a voice from the hollow, or from another hilltop ? We will patiently wait—each one, in the meanwhile, striving to do his own work as the Spirit instructs him. With him or without him, Wales must not impoverish its heritage by vain regrets, by idle expectations. The democratic soul of the people, kindled of God, made the revival : that alone can make its truth permanent. Let God be thanked for the servants He called, and especially for the most prominent among them all, during a rich if brief season. Who knows but that, after the miles of hushed journeying, his voice will be heard again—nearer the City ? John Tauler preached a great sermon in Strasburg on dying to self ; and then passed from the glow of his popularity into two sorrowful, friendless years. When he reappeared, he was nearer the City,

CHAPTER IV

"YE SHALL BE NAMED THE PRIESTS OF THE LORD"

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In the meanwhile, during those months, Wales was all revivalists. If, at first, prayer almost blotted out the sermon, soon the sermon was restored, as the flame began to burn dimly, because of the oil in the lamp being used up so rapidly. The preacher returned, the evangelist was called. What if there were mistakes and delusions? What if some, mere imitators of Evan Roberts, copied only his clairvoyant moods and reproving silence? Let their mistakes be forgotten, their delusion pardoned, and their wish to help be remembered. It must be confessed that many of these "minor brethren" were but poorly equipped; but congregations, by this time, were so ripe for blessing, and so quick to help in obtaining it, that scarcely any one proved too humble to be of use. This, however, led to a disappointing inference. Outside Wales, hearts eager for the blessing looked to these itinerant singers

and evangelists to bring to them the same results. The expectation was not realised, as a little calm consideration might have forewarned all concerned. These young missioners found in Wales a charged battery, with, as it were, but a finger's touch required to distribute the current and achieve the result. Almost everything was made ready for them, and a very little assistance went a very long way. But it was not so, when they came to congregations outside Wales. The anxiety, the wistfulness, might be there, but not in a form which they could use. That many of them did profitable work, we have testimony from several quarters; but they should not have been expected to reproduce a Welsh Revival—nor perhaps, had they done it, would it have been a very desirable result. Nations, like men, attain to the highest culture of religion by preserving their individuality.

In Wales itself, from January far past Whitsuntide a kind of united national service was continuously proceeding: prayer-meeting, love-feast, Christian Endeavour, preaching festival, all in one, week after week, in town and hamlet. It was the subject of conversation in trains, in the market-place, at school, even in the public-house. There was no means of escaping it. Men might stay away determinedly from meetings, but a child's voice, or a paragraph in the daily paper, would find them,

some unexpected moment. A man who had been for years estranged from chapel, and was growing old and lonely outside the Kingdom, heard one evening some little ones, who were staying with him, singing in their bedrooms when they should be asleep. He listened, and he heard a little voice lisping sweetly: *Ar Ei ben bo'r goron* (On His head be the crown)—only the r's were pronounced as l's. He opened the door, and told them to hush. "Would you not like to clown (crown) Jesus, uncle?" asked the little one innocently. And gentle sleep soon closed the eyes of the little questioner, but left unvisited the eyes of the one questioned. He was haunted by it all night, and haunted still when morning light came; he found no peace for his soul, until he retraced his steps to the Saviour and the chapel he had left.

The converts themselves were witnesses and missionaries. "Here am I," cried one, "greatest wonder of all! All my life I have been fighting against Him: but what a change! I am alive to-day in the box, giving evidence for Him here." And in every neighbourhood they were giving evidence for Him, and winning others to His side. To meet them, to hear them, in one district after another, was an ever fresh surprise, a miracle of grace in some new setting.

One could never foretell who or what would be

used in kindling and in reviving the flame. I remember one prayer-meeting, dull and listless, although preceded the evening before by an exquisite service. There was no freedom in prayer this night, no grip in the song. There came a pause—an unfruitful pause, apparently: for while pauses could be more impressive than spoken prayer or recaptured song, there were pauses that dragged heavily. Into the embarrassing silence stole a quiet, restrained voice, the voice of one who had been purified through sorrow and faithfulness: she repeated, with accurate memory, the two verses of Habakkuk: "Although the fig-treeshall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail and the fields shall yield no increase: the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." It was not a recital, but the fresh expression of an experience, fragment of a soul's memoirs. Before she had concluded, the atmosphere was mysteriously changed; there was no dulness, no sluggishness: there were no barren pauses; we were in the world of prayer, bathed in its flowing air, standing on its heaven-swept hills. Ten minutes before—and ten minutes after—did not seem to be part of the same season of Time. And such a little thing, so to speak, had wrought all the change!

In one town a mission had been arranged, and a well-tried missioner had come to conduct it. Under any ordinary circumstances the meetings would have been considered both effective and successful. One evening, there was a preliminary service for young people; and, owing to the hour fixed, it was a good deal disturbed by some entering late, and others obliged to leave early. A young student present proposed that they should go in procession through the town to invite all to the later meeting. As they were leaving, he assured them that they were to have the outpoured blessing that very night. "Every step you take, make it a step for Jesus Christ." So they marched singing, stopping here and there to pray, and invite the people. When they returned the large chapel was crowded. So they took possession of the schoolroom, and conducted a meeting of their own—or, rather, it was conducted for them. Prayer followed prayer; often one prayer joined in with another. Then the voice of a young man, who had felt great things in his own district, could be heard with insistent, resonant voice crying—"Give it now—now—NOW!" And with the last word, something indefinable swept the audience. It was one chorus henceforth of rejoicing experience in song and thanksgiving. People streamed in, for the news seemed to spread as if by wireless telegraph; they even came out of the chapel to

see this wonderful sight. But those who came to see, remained to become themselves part of it. The place was at last so overcrowded, that the young leader again took the matter in hand, and gave the word of command for another procession. What had filled the schoolroom now filled the town. The crowd moved in a shining cloud of prayer and song, thrilled and awed. And when they returned to the chapel, it still went on, to the accompaniment of ever fresh conversions. In the whole course of the revival, that impromptu meeting holds its own place. No one knew an hour before that it would be held ; no one could precisely describe what came into it. It surrounded itself with the halo of unexpectedness ; and hundreds will remember and recall it to their dying day.

Again to illustrate the use of the word in season, this simple incident may be given. An old hearer in one church was seen one evening to hesitate, when the society was announced at the close of the prayer-meeting. In the lobby he met another, to whom he spoke—"Have you come out, too?" "Yes," replied the other, "I was going to stay, but that I saw you leave." The minister and others, having noticed his hesitation, went to see him, and obtained a sort of promise from him to confess Christ the following Sunday evening. The hearts of all kindled with expectation, especially when

there was great power felt during the service. But to their keen and sorrowful disappointment, after again hesitating, he rose to leave. He had reached the door, and was trying to open it, when the nearest neighbour to the door, said, "What! are you turning your back on us to-night again?" He turned, and glanced at the questioner's face, and saw it touched with tears. His hand fell from the door, as he asked: "Have you room for me beside you?" "Room? yes!" was the answer, as if he would have vacated the whole chapel to make room for him. And that man, humbly seated near the door, tasted that night the joy there is in the presence of the angels over one sinner that repenteth.

Probably the work that most deeply affected the people who were not of Wales, was the work carried on at Cardiff, with scarcely if any break for seven months. Ebenezer (Congregational) Chapel and the Tabernacle (Baptist) became great evangelistic centres, day and night. The cosmopolitan influence of these meetings is exemplified in this one episode: One evening, a German was present at the meeting, attracted by the sound of singing. Able to understand but little, the atmosphere wrought in his soul such conviction that he could not keep silent. In his own language he told his wanderings among paths of evil, and his sudden arrest there, a Nor-

wegian becoming the impromptu interpreter to the audience.

One evening a man spending the night in the town was induced to attend. He was one of four sitting together at table, making fine fun of the revival. But one who overheard the conversation was strengthened to interrupt them, and invited this man to come and see for himself. Certainly he would come : it would probably be the finest entertainment in the town that night ! But as for anything else—he laughed at the very name of God. So the two went ; and the one, with every step he made, kept praying that God would deal with his mocking comrade. They sat near the door ; and within a few moments of entering, the mystic power brought some uneasiness to the mind of the scorner. Then came the strains and words of the far-travelled song—" Tell mother I'll be there." The man who had prayed could not help watching the face of the man who had laughed at it all : with the first singing of the chorus, it became deathly pale. " Are you not well ? " he asked. " Oh, don't ask me : no one will ever tell *that* to my mother : I have broken her heart ! " The friend tried to minister comfort, but it only added to the man's pitiful sufferings. " I am the worst sinner in all this crowd ! " he cried.

When an opportunity was given for surrender

to Christ, this man rose and went forward: his distress touched every heart as he stood up to ask if any one could tell him there was hope anywhere for the worst sinner in that city that night! And then it seemed as if the whole congregation had become God's silver trumpet, sounding in his ears all the evangelic promises of grace, till some one gave—"Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out." And the sufferer turned to prayer, helped to the throne by a thousand hearts as one. Months afterwards, he was one of four holding a mission service in the very chapel where he had entered as a scorner, and left as a saved man. Wherever he has gone on his travels, if there was any chance at all, he has held or taken part in many a mission service, his message being based on the story of his conversion. With several strangers and foreigners converted during these months, correspondence is faithfully kept up; and converts nearer home are watched with tender care.

It was something after this fashion that Wales became all revivalists, the churches almost all priests. The humblest found some priestly service to fulfil, some marvel of grace to accomplish. Familiar acquaintances became strangers, as the light transfigured them. "What mother had the privilege

of bringing up that dear little lad?" asked a woman of another, after listening to the voice without being able to see the face of a lad, as he knelt in prayer, in the midst of the crowd. "Why," said the other, amazed at the question, who had frequented the meetings more than the questioner— "why, it was your own boy." And the joy was almost too much for a mother who had found her child a stranger. "Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy"— so well that the parents may not recognise the prophets.

PART IV

AMONG THE SHEAVES

CHAPTER I

LESSONS AND ESTIMATES

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It is too early to sum up the results of the revival. We are too much within the affected area to see things in their right perspective. It would be foolish to think that all expectations have been realised; for, to begin with, they were not all lawful expectations. A revival does not finish, it only begins work. It does not build; it supplies material for the building. If any minister or church be tempted to call the revival a failure, they pass judgment, not upon it only, but upon themselves as well. The revival has opened new fields: are they to be cultivated? or are they to be left untilled, and marked as lost? Let the churches resolutely, patiently, prayerfully accept the fresh burden of responsibility; let them consider it their privilege to guide, to guard, to teach: and it will be impossible for the revival to fail.

It has brought new difficulties; it has occasioned some friction, in churches, between the older members

and recent converts ; it has stirred up the spirit of intolerance on both sides. That is true—not generally, but in places. But what does a Christian church exist for, if not for the culture of Christian graces ? Let those who have been in the church for a life-time count it a divine chance to learn the lesson of a more perfect patience in dealing with these recruit-converts. The latter have old habits to fight with, old companionships from which to liberate themselves, a new speech to practise. Some of them are ignorant ; some too forward ; some too self-contained, taking for granted that every one must taste salvation exactly as they have tasted it, and give the date of the new birth as they give it. If one man is *sure* that he is saved, every one else ought to be equally sure, he thinks, and precisely in the same way sure. All this is in the air in Wales to-day. But is it there to be permitted to stir up mischief, or to be overcome by the riches of grace ? It is no time to be merely censorious ; it is a time for vigilance of spirit, for incessant prayer—with illimitable charity.

We need scarcely refer to some of the extravagances of excitement which have spasmodically broken out here and there. They are local ; they are temporary ; they are confined to the few. They are part of any great movement : perhaps Flagellants and White Hoods in one age and country,

Pentecostal dancers and miracle-mongers in another age and country. They furnish spicy newspaper paragraphs; but let them be looked at in their true proportion, at least. That they are grievous for the time being is true: that they are something which directly reflects on this revival is not true. Wales has its own burden to bear; let it not be held up specifically for faults and failures that are common to the race.

Having said this—and leaving more that might be said—let us take the broader view of the revival, and I have no hesitation in reaffirming that its fruit is incalculably rich. Figures prove something: but they are inconstant in value. Some few months ago Dr. Edwards, Principal of the Baptist College at Cardiff, sent out between four and five hundred circulars to the churches of his denomination, for revival returns. In some churches, the percentage of loss was minutely small; in others it was discouragingly large. But taking the whole, it was about 20 per cent. Let this be compared with any other table of results—say of Band of Hope or Sunday School—or let any minister compare it with an audit of the results of his own ministry, and there will be yet much left to the credit of the revival. Nevertheless when this has been said, it is still true that we are not much nearer any safe conclusion from figures, either for or against.

Where the percentage is disconcertingly large, is the revival to be blamed, or the church ? It would require nothing less than a national commission of enquiry to collect and sift the figures, with due regard to all that lies behind them, before they could be of value as evidence, for or against.

If there are churches that have not risen to their opportunity, there are also peculiar difficulties unconsciously created by some of the converts themselves. They came in, as in a whirlwind, breathless, all but overwhelmed with a vivid, almost a physical, sense of escape. Each one was a wonder to himself, as if there were no other soul besides ever so wondrously saved. It was a fresh tale of grace ; and in telling it there was a freshness of phrase that charmed. But repeated time after time, it began to grow stale : it does not charm when it has been told twenty times, as it charmed in the first or second telling. The prayer that moved to laughter and tears together, because of its colloquial quaintness, becomes less quaint the third—the seventh—time. What Williams of Wern said once, in baptizing a child, is applicable to these children of the revival. " This is now the king of the hearth," he remarked : " every one must attend to his least command ; at his first call every one must run ; night and day, his rule will be supreme. But remember—his reign is to last for twelve months only. He must then

be taken down from his throne, and take his place as subject—or else he will be spoilt for life." With tact and patience must the converts also be taught to take their places among the rest of the household; they must give up being wonders, and become ordinary and wise.

But the more precious fruit of the revival is still in part uncalculated. It is not too much to say that the religious outlook of the nation as a whole has been widened by it: a loftier height has been reached where fresh ideals rise, stronger and purer. It is but stating a plain fact to say that to thousands of young people the whole meaning of life has been transformed. The old foes are not dead, former temptations have not vanished; but there is a new spirit to oppose the foe, a fresh grace to outwit the temptation. I know of no district without a number of men and women of middle-age as well, raised from a common level of formal religion to higher latitudes, where currents of inspiration flow, where calls to service are heard and obeyed.

Let me turn to a typical instance. A lad, brought up in a religious home, was following his parents' way from mere respect to them. He lived an almost vacant life, reading little beyond the athletic news of the evening edition. He was not even an athlete: he was a mere looker-on. He

opened his Bible, when he went to Sunday School, and did little more. He was in danger of losing himself, as far as devotion was concerned, between English and Welsh, being proficient in neither, beyond the needs of everyday life. He was too kind-natured to grieve his parents; but they were growing anxious about him. He began to attend the early prayer-meetings of the revival: before twelve months had passed, there was no one in the church more active, more useful, more ready. He gave himself to learning Welsh properly: his Welsh Bible took the place of the evening edition, the service of Christ became a substitute for the football ground. He has learnt to take part in prayer, to give an address, to teach the children, to visit the sick and the poor, to watch over his former comrades. He is at his post to-day, the once vacant life filled to the brim. Multiply that one instance by a thousand, and what a vista of Christ-captured usefulness is suggested! But even a thousandfold is only a portion, not a whole.

Nothing was more noteworthy in the general course of the movement than the women's part. In scores of districts the coming of the felt power was through them—their song, their prayer, their testimony. Some who had been in the church faithful and consistent, but silent, for forty or fifty years, suddenly found effectual speech: young

women, in an awakening dawn of earnestness, seemed to find themselves at the gate of heaven. It was a universal baptism of obedience, a national Christian Endeavour. "We rejoice," said one in his prayer, "to see our sisters here. It is they who still break the box of ointment on the Saviour's head, and we men enjoy the sweet odour." The part they took so effectively during all those months makes one wonder if they must retire again into silence till another like season is due?

There is still another aspect of the revival which heightens its value. It called the attention of the whole world to the modernity of the Christian faith. In an age which admired its own smartness, in asking "Is Christianity played out?" there appeared this fresh incarnation of the gladness, the rapture, of the gospel of Galilean fields, of the anguished cry of Pentecost rising into a doxology of redeeming love. "God had made them rejoice with great joy: the wives also and the children rejoiced: so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off." Through the length and breadth of Christendom the joy of Wales was heard, awaking echoes on the veldt, among the Andes, beneath the Southern Cross, among "Arabia's desert rangers," on the hills of Khassia, in the forests of Madagascar. There were mission fields—as, for example, the last two named—where the revival was reproduced

almost in facsimile. In Madagascar it came through the young people; it grew into a chorus of spontaneous prayer, and in prayer-meetings scores of people were converted. There was perhaps no colony of Welsh people anywhere that did not obtain the blessing as richly as at home. The story of the revival among the Welsh colony of Patagonia is as wonderful as anything in the homeland; and the effect of that on portions of South America is not yet concluded. The sum of results, at home and abroad, is the greatest apologetic of prayer in these modern days; and to teach the Church to pray is to teach it to triumph.

CHAPTER II

THE REDISCOVERED SENSE OF SIN

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In the course of the narrative we have given many instances of sudden and intense conviction of sin. If any one imagined that the temper of the age had made the sense of sin obsolete, he will have to take these facts into account before he can be sure where things are. It may be conceded that some of the manifestations were partly due to physical causes —some to what has been termed an enlarged conscience—some to the mere excitement in the air. But all these put together do not exhaust more than a small proportion of the hundreds of cases involved.

Many will feel that there is a distinction to be drawn between giving up infidel literature and membership cards at drinking clubs, on the one hand, to be burnt, and, on the other, making a sacrificial fire of tobacco pipes and football properties. But here the doctrine of the doubtful things applies, according to which what may have

been in itself lawful was to be abandoned if it became inexpedient, if it stood in the way of full surrender and whole-hearted consecration. That the athletic spirit, apart from some of its evil accompaniments, had encroached in Wales, as elsewhere, on better, nobler exercises, there can be no doubt. In the revulsion of feeling produced by the thought of wasted time, of duties neglected, of unchristlike companionships, one can understand the zeal that threw costume and ball into the fire. In the same way, those who had been fond of dancing, without any injury to their maiden innocence, found themselves constrained to relinquish it or lose the smile of Christ.

Similarly, the question of total abstinence became acute—not simply to the drunken, which was natural, but to moderate drinkers. Let me again illustrate by means of single instances. In one small country church the fire had been slowly burning for some weeks ; but the one memorable evening came in this fashion. One of the members, who had been faithful through the long years, and had lived a consistent life in the sight of all, appeared strangely moved during the meeting. There was a Presence to be felt in the little unadorned chapel. At last he rose, and said : " This is the first happy meeting for me in all my life ! " They were startled and dumbfounded : had he not always taken part,

with profit to all, in the church's prayer-meetings ? He went on quickly, but in a storm of emotions, to say that he had attended the weekly services regularly, as they knew, and as regularly called at the public-house, with a friend, on their way there. He had not seen any harm in it. But that evening something had stopped him ; and when his friend was about to enter the public-house in the usual way, he had said : " No : not to-night." He had come straight to chapel : and now he had had his first perfectly happy prayer-meeting. And having learnt the secret, he meant to respect it. He was useful in the church before : since that evening his presence and devotion are its new life.

We return to Glamorganshire, to one of its historic churches. At the beginning of the present year there was a temperance revival, as spontaneous, as inexplicable apparently, as the revival twelve months before. There was no temperance mission ; but men seemed of themselves to discover instinctively that they should give up the drink. And at the prayer-meetings, night after night, the number of signatures increased. One evening a man rose to relate his experience : they all knew him, he said, as a moderate drinker, almost indeed an abstainer. But his health being indifferent, he had occasionally at home taken beer at supper.

That evening he had been reading, he told them further, the Fourth Chapter of St. John's Gospel, had come to the words: "Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well." And it came home to him in one bright sudden flash —"If the water of the well was good enough for my Saviour, when tired, it is good enough for me!" And having related his simple experience, he turned and said: "Give me the book to sign."

There were many cases, all over the country, of men coming under conviction while in a drunken state. And in no case within my personal knowledge—let the limits be observed, for fear of any too general inference—has there been a relapse. One evening a farmer and his son made their way from their farmstead among the hills to the village below. Their paths separated: the father entered the public-house, the son the chapel. There the father remained drinking till closing time—a man of no mean intellectual gifts, but profane of speech, and addicted to drink. The rain was falling fast when he had to pass out into the darkness of the winter's night. He was afraid to go home by himself, so there was no choice but to seek the shelter of the chapel lobby: so minutely do the links of the chain seem to be welded! He tried to steady himself as he entered, and gradually became a listener. He was able in his partial stupor

to recognise a voice in prayer, the voice of his own son, pleading with sobs: "O God, save my father!—save my father. Thou art saving everybody else, don't forget him!" And then silence, followed again by some brief petition, but the prayer ever returned to "save my father!" He had, at the first recognition, opened the inner door and from step to step had made his way down to where the lad, oblivious of all but the sorrow of his prayer, was kneeling. The prayer had ended in a sob; but he still remained with the rest kneeling,* when he felt on his shoulder a heavy, unsteady hand, and heard a voice so familiar, yet so strange: "Here am I, my lad, if God will have me!"

Next evening there were no parted paths for father and son, nor during the weeks and months that followed. It was far on into the summer when I heard him, beneath an exquisite June sky at evening, leader in praising God, and still later in the night conducting a prayer-meeting on the village square—the talents, used for so long in the devil's service, now used for God's merchandise. "The corn on the higher slopes ripens more slowly than yours in the valleys," was one of his sayings; "but when it ripens the grain is as well-seasoned, as hard, as

* Frequently, all present at a meeting during those months would, with one impulse, at some particular moment, kneel and perhaps remain kneeling to the close. Usually, they remain seated.

any of yours in the valley. Who knows but some of us, old sinners, will, through grace, be sound grain at the last ? "

From that summer scene deep among the hills I am taken in memory to another scene among the hills : but those first hills were mostly left as Nature made them ; these other hills were riven and burrowed for their treasures of darkness. It was an autumn Monday morning ; and as the sermon closed, or perhaps, indeed, before it closed, a sequence of prayer continued the service. Each prayer had a character of its own ; but one of these was particularly touching. " I have never before been at Bethany on a Monday morning to listen to an anniversary sermon ; I would not have dreamt of such a thing last year : but I am here this morning —and, O Lord, I thank Thee for it." In such direct simple phrases he prayed, quietly but intensely, our hearts being strangely moved without knowing why ; for some only learnt his history afterwards. At the first kindling of the revival, when some notorious sinners were being brought in, some one mentioned him, chief of them all—prize-fighter, drunkard, gambler, the terror of all who knew him. Even those who had seen miracles were staggered when his name was mentioned. But instant prayer was made by many on his behalf ; and one evening, a man braver in faith and courage than

the rest had not only ventured to ask him to come to the meeting, but had obtained his word of honour that he would come. There was, however, no sign of him till the service was well advanced. He came staggering through the door, and made his way, with drunken, zig-zag steps, to the pulpit-pew—usually, in Welsh chapels, occupied by the deacons. The minister saw him, and watched him with deepening anxiety—not to say fear, when he saw him sit at last among his deacons in front of him. The congregation was naturally disturbed and for a few moments put out of tune: then it dawned upon faithful pleaders what an opportunity of grace was here; so prayer redoubled its earnestness. The minister was doubtful what to do; but in his heart he said: This man is not to be turned out, cost what it may! He quietly rose, while many around were praying, and laying his hand on the man's shoulder softly—not forgetting who and what he was—he called him by name, and said kindly: "You will be quiet, won't you? you will not disturb the meeting?" "No, no," he replied mistily, "no, no: I mean to *stick*" (*i.e.*, colloquially, strive hard). And he kept repeating his one phrase in drunken fashion. By-and-by, he went on his knees, and prayed a drunkard's unintelligible prayer—to the horror of all. The meeting closed: what was to be done? Such a scene would mar the

revival, if it were repeated. "I believe," said the man who had obtained his promise to attend, "that he got drunk because he could not muster courage when he was sober, to come: give him another chance." There were sleepless eyes that night. "If ever I prayed in my life," said the minister, "I prayed through the hours of that night—prayed God to save the man and save the revival." Yet faith had not banished all anxiety when the next evening came. He was earlier than usual in his place, still praying, still a little afraid. But one glance at the man as he came through the door reassured him: he walked with steady step, he was "clothed and in his right mind." No seat, however, in the building would do for him to-night, either, but among the deacons. To see him there, as he was, remembering all that he had been—is there need to add that *that* meeting will remain to many, as long as life shall last, one of the unforgotten scenes of earth? He took part in prayer—repentant and sober. And from that night up to the morning when I heard him, many months later, he had lived a convincing life as a Christian. From the further boundaries of the far country he had been carried not to the nearer frontiers of the Kingdom of Heaven, but far inland. He was, and is, one of the convert missionaries of the revival.

In many instances—we have in another chapter narrated one of the most remarkable—conviction was accompanied with intense, sometimes prolonged, mental suffering. Strong men were shaken, and fell to the ground, helpless. It was as if a page of Bunyan had been inserted into the early days of the twentieth century. One reads of similar scenes in the narrative of the New England revival, in Jonathan Edwards's day: it is usually explained as the result of powerful preaching of hell and everlasting punishment. But in the Welsh revival one seldom heard a reference to the sinner's destiny: its grandest hymn was a love-song. There must be deep in the human heart an indestructible sense of sin, which may be awakened by a sound of thunder from Sinai, or by a whisper from Gethsemane; by a torrent or by a rain-drop from Calvary's clouds. "O Lord," said one in his prayer, months after the day of cloud and tempest, "here am I remaining with Thy people. I used to leave; but one night I failed. Thy hand was laid on my forehead: it weighed me down in my pew, that I could not *budge*!"

CHAPTER III

STRUGGLE AND VICTORY

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WHAT was the effect of grace ? Was it immediate, or gradual ? triumphant, or only arresting ? The answer cannot be in one word : for its effect varied. There are instances in which it immediately and absolutely triumphed. For example, in some the thirst for drink was simply and altogether removed : up to a particular moment it was tyrannical ; in that one moment its power disappeared, never to return ; so far—as when Peter was released by the angel—"his chains fell from off his hands." Similarly, lips addicted to foul language became suddenly circumcised ; and to this day, according to the witness of all, the old speech has never returned. On the other hand, there have been long and painful struggles—conflicts even unto death.

A young woman, a professing Christian from childhood, exemplary in conduct and spirit—except for an ingrained love of money, like her parents before her—became deeply moved by the revival. She

was one of the first to take part, and took part well, for she was gifted above the common. She was made discontented for Christ's sake: she came, with clearly earnest intentions, to ask the minister how she could further and better serve Christ. She was a good needle-woman. So he told her of a family in trouble, through the death of a child: the father was a convert, but miserably poor from the results of his former life. He asked her if she felt she could do this kindness?—buy the material, for which the bill was to be sent to him, and she could make the dresses for the children. She gladly undertook it: the bill for the material came to him in due course. But a little later he received also from her, the bill for making them—to the full amount. That there had been an intense, an agonising struggle, between the old lust for money and the new desire of grace, he learnt afterwards; but the victory went to the former. The struggle cost her in the end her life.

In the case of the victims of drink, those who resolutely from the first became total abstainers, have almost without exception conquered; where they compromised, they have largely gone back. But of those who have remained, to some the cost of victory has been great. One man, for months after his conversion, day by day made a circuit of between two and three miles, from his home to

his work, in order to avoid passing the public-house which had been the ruin of his life and home. If the vote of that neighbourhood was taken, I doubt if the number in favour of retaining it would go beyond the fingers of one hand.

One evening at the close of a power-filled meeting a man came in pitiable distress to ask the minister what was he to do? He wished to give himself to Christ, but felt too weak to pass the public-house between his home and the chapel. His distress was heartrending; and the minister knelt with him to pray for help. Would he come the next evening disgraced, or victorious? All day the man was in a long and weary conflict of soul: he came home, more and more tortured with the fear of defeat. He got ready to go to chapel, but still lingered. Suddenly catching sight of his little girl, he said: "Let her come with me." The mother thought of the probably late meeting, and she was on the point of objecting; but something told her to yield. She did at once, and brightly. And the little one had her father's hand all to herself all the way—an unaccustomed thing. Through the whole length of the meeting she sat, and watched, and sometimes slumbered beside him—"in the sleep-time of the others"—but when he left again, the little hand was held fast in his. Probably she

never guessed why it was gripped so hard, once or twice, on the way—almost to giving her pain ; but it was father's hand, so it did not matter. He is still walking, firm and constant, in Christ's way—God help him, and many like him !

With the first outpouring of the Spirit, churches which had received the blessing became increasingly missionary. It was not enough to wait for people to come—they must be invited. So a band of young people would go out singing, and praying, and inviting. One evening such a band was standing before a workmen's club. And as they sang and gave the invitation, a lad appeared in the window above, laughing and jeering. But they spoke and prayed all the more earnestly. He disappeared for a moment, then returned, with a pint pot in his hand, shaking it, as if in their faces, till it overflowed. They went to their chapel, saddened, but not defeated. Some evenings later the lad was with them, smitten to the ground, and " with no language but a cry " in his soul's stormy night. A few weeks later I heard him pray : his language was neither Welsh nor English, but a strange mixture of both. He broke down in his prayer ; words would not come that night, try as he would. They still ring in my ears, those accents of a soul thirsting for expression : " O dear Jesus, give me words, give me words, to thank Thee——" The last news I heard of him was

that he was daily improving in Christian speech, with never a suspicion of his yielding to the old habit.

Next comes a soldier. He had served in India; he had been through the Transvaal War. He was not devoid of either religious knowledge or religious inclinations; but he had strayed into the "far country." Having come home, and sitting one evening in the public-house, he heard the others discuss the one topic of interest in every locality in Wales during the winter of 1904-5—the revival. As he listened, although he was already under the influence of drink, he was increasingly disturbed, and at last could stay there no longer. On his way he met a prominent member of one of the churches, and told him he wished to join the church. "But you must mend your ways before you can do that," said the other, as he saw in what state he was. He went home, and spent a sleepless night of misery, until, as the dawn drew nigh, a glimmering sense of pardon touched the grey depths of his soul. He found his way to Christ and His church, and his life became one unbroken prayer for help to overcome; he prayed in words whenever he had the chance, alone or in company, and the prayer without words filled in the spaces between. He had gone on for months, successfully baffling the tempter, when one night he dreamt that he had fallen back again into the pit of drunkenness; and he heard

a voice saying: "You have gone away from God—for ever—for ever—for ever!" It was all so actual to him that he sobbed and shook in his sleep, so frightening his wife that she woke him. The first moment of full awakening, and of finding that it was but a dream, he leapt out of bed, and on his knees thanked God, in broken, rapturous phrases, that he was still in the kingdom of grace. But all the terror of the dream returned to him when next day an old comrade unexpectedly called to see him, and asked him to accompany him. The hour of temptation had come with this sudden upthrow from the old life. What could he do? For a moment he felt utter despair. But he recovered himself, told his comrade he would be ready in a few moments, and retired—to pray for strength. Who but those who know the sting of old sins can realise his anguish? He returned, but with a new light in his soul. While on his knees, he had remembered that there was a way of reaching the place where his friend wished to go, a path through the woods—*without passing a public-house*. So they started; but they had not gone far before his friend began to explain that many things had changed since they used to soldier it together; and little by little, with shyness at first, he told his story, and said at last: "And do you know that I have found Christ, and that makes all the difference?" There was

an indescribable moment of mutual surprise in that wood, when the haunting sense of fear and peril gave way to the common rapture of two saved souls.

In a quiet town, beside the sea, a man came in at the flood-tide of prayer, whose mind was one cloud of undisturbed ignorance—a man living on the lowest human fringe. He, too, had no language, when he was stricken to the ground, but a moan and a shout of distress. From the first, however, he gave himself, body and mind, to the marvellous new life. He lived a sort of hawker's life, and was some time after his conversion driving home his horse and cart from the inland hills, when his horse stumbled and fell. He leapt to the ground, with a loud "Hallelujah!" from his lips, re-echoing far in the evening air. Some workmen, by the roadside, looked on astonished and amazed. "It's rather odd," they remarked, "to sing Hallelujah when your horse falls!" "Oh, well," he said, the sober face retaining all its seriousness, but with a gleam of light, "it was Hallelujah, not because the horse fell, but because I didn't swear." This man dwelt in prayer: whenever he thought he was alone, his prayers became audible, and more than once startled and impressed some unseen hearer. He began to learn the Welsh alphabet, and to read; and every day's autobiography passed into prayer. "I thank Thee, Lord, for helping me with the A B C: we

are getting on fine together." And then, still praying, his words were turned towards those around him—a well-known mark of the prayers of the revival—and he continued: "Now, lads, you mind, if you don't make haste I shall catch you up very soon. I hope to read the Bible, and the Book of Ruth. You must make haste, indeed, or I shall get ahead of you." Why the choice of the Book of Ruth? I have heard it referred to several times in converts' prayers. Is it because of Ruth's covenant of love with Naomi: "Intreat me not to leave thee"? Two years ago this man was ignorant and dark, a mere companion of his dog—drunken, foul-mouthed, in a miserable home. To-day he adorns the doctrine of Christ, visibly growing in knowledge and grace, in gift of prayer and religious speech. One evening, some weeks ago, he was speaking at a society meeting. He said he had been watching a fishing boat: at first it was floating smoothly with the tide, and the men's arms lay idly at their sides. But by-and-by they had to cross the bar; and to do that, they had to bend to the oars, and lend the strength of both arms to carry the boat in. Then he applied his parable: "During those glorious weeks we were carried on the flood-tide; some very clumsy boats made a pretty fine show: but now we are crossing the bar, and we shall lose ground, unless we toil with both arms."

As far as I have been able to analyse the evidence, two facts come out with clearness: that some of the very worst are to-day the soundest, and the percentage of failure among them is not so high as among those who loiter about the church-doors. The other fact that comes out is that those who were brought in with the morning dew of the revival, at the home-born prayer-meetings, stand better than those who came later, with the excitement and heat of mixed and crowded audiences. While the simple but irresistible power of prayer was honoured and trusted, the work of grace proved most effectual and most lasting. What Wales needs this moment is courage to dwell, to make her abode, in her prayer-meetings—and in prayer: with Mary, "her eyes" made

> "homes of silent prayer";

abandoning herself to the comfort of faith—

> "All subtle thoughts, all curious fears
> Borne down by gladness so complete";

never forgetting that daily conduct helps to mar or make every prayer—

> "Thrice blest whose lives are faithful prayers."

In mining valley, on the heathered hill, in town and hamlet, a voice comes to old and young, to fresh convert and saintly veteran: it is—*Let us pray!* The revival has only begun its career.

CHAPTER IV

PRAYER: THE CHILDREN'S WAY

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WHAT gave so many of the prayers their interest, their power, their effectiveness, was, as we have said, that they were the direct expression of life. Men and women prayed in the language of their most real experiences : the miner had no dictionary but the mine, the shepherd none but the mountain and the sheepfold, the sailor none but the sea. Athletics, trade, all were constrained into the service of devotion. Naturally there were extravagant phrases, tolerable in the heated atmosphere, otherwise to be forbidden and forgotten. Taken out of their setting some of the sublimest phrases lose something ; frequently, too, it happened that a whole life-history was crystallised in a glowing sentence. The warmth of the atmosphere favoured the flowering of imagination, so that it often seemed as if a Crashaw or a Henry Vaughan had become reincarnated. "Praise be to Thy Name," cried one,

"for the prints of the nails—four windows to see Thy love." "I was passing the Bank of England this morning, and read on it that it was to close at three in the afternoon. But God be praised, it was at three o'clock in the afternoon Calvary's Bank was opened. And, blessed be His name, it is always open, and the Banker in the office calling—'Whosoever cometh'!" "Great Saviour!" cried another, "I feel a thousand wounds of sin in my soul, but there is a leaf on the Tree of Life for every wound I have." "Make us like cedars of Lebanon," pleaded another, "and not mere hawthorn bushes growing along the ground." "Forgive our oaths and profane words in this old quarry, lest we hear these old rocks re-echo them in our ears in the Judgment Day!" "This old earth," said another, "is very large; but Thou didst not sweat in creating it; but in finishing the plan for saving sinners, Thy sweat fell in drops of blood."

Many of the prayers had an element of quaint humour, which helped to mingle smiles with tears. It was a soldier, who had fought more than once under the British flag, that thanked God for a place among the soldiers of the Lamb: "In the British army, a soldier cannot hope for more than a pension, but under the new flag I have hope of a fortune." It was a little child, because of the inroads of drink on the mission where his mother

helped, that prayed—"O Lord, burn down the breweries, every one—but let the men who work there come out first." "Sometimes," confessed another in his prayer, "I used to conceal a shilling in the Bible without my wife's knowledge; but after the revival came, she has taken to reading the Bible every day, and I have had to change my bank." "I was like an old grandfather's clock," said another naïvely, "the face looked fair enough, but the machinery was out of order." They delighted in confessing against themselves—but occasionally with a limitation: "O Lord, Thou hast saved the worst in this place—and that's me! No, beg pardon, Lord; now I think of it there is one worse than I am. Thou knowest whom I mean—I could give Thee his address. But save him, too!" Were they not, many of them, children's soliloquies?

Port Arthur figured in many a prayer towards Christmastide, as its fall became more and more imminent. "The old devil," complained one, with simple pathos, "is coming round these days to try and deceive me. But he may as well give it up: I am beginning to get the upper hand over him. They tell me—I don't know—that those Japs before Port Arthur are taking the guns of the Russians, and turn their mouths to bombard them with their own guns. So I do: I try to bombard the old devil with his own guns, and he is beginning to

lose the day, and I expect to conquer him before long."

I cannot forget a meeting being bathed as in a sunny mist of dew, while a saintly old man carried on this conversation with God: "My dear Father, Thou hast come to this meeting. I had asked Thee to come. I had told Thee Thou must come this year, at any cost. And here Thou art! And Thou art so very good! Because I had forgotten one thing when asking Thee to come: I had forgotten to ask Thee to keep me well for the meetings. And last Sunday I was feeling very unwell, and I feared I would miss these services. It was rather late for me to ask Thee to make me better, but I ventured to ask—and here I am—yes, here I am! Thou art here; that is no wonder: but I am here, and that is the wonder!"

It was a shepherd who melted into his prayer the phrases of everyday life in this manner: "O Lord, I bless Thy name for bringing me also back to the fold. I had wandered in the desert very far—in the thorns and briars, very far: further than any one knows but Thyself and me. My name was on the church-book: I doubt if it was on Thy book. But Thou hast found me, and brought me to Thy fold. O Lord, make fresh Thy mark upon me—make fresh Thy mark, that every one may see the Name and know to whom I belong!"

One of the most impressive prayers I heard was by an old man at Rhos. He rose and began by saying: "Lord, these are Thine own words, Thy great and precious promises"—and proceeded to recite, word for word, with fervent eloquence the 49th chapter of Isaiah, which seemed as if written in view of what was then happening around us: "In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: . . . that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves. . . . Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the Lord hath comforted His people. . . . Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, and come to thee. . . . Thus saith the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered. . . . And all flesh shall know that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob." The rich music of the Welsh version was still lingering in our ears, when, having repeated the whole portion without a break, he closed and said simply: "Now, Lord, those are Thine own words: Thou wilt have to make them good—to-night; for Christ's sake. Amen." I knew before, but felt anew that evening, that the Bible was native to every land, original in every

language, the latest news of every day. It was that same evening, later, that a chief of sinners—to whom reference has been made in an earlier chapter—was brought to the Saviour—"the prey of the terrible" delivered. It was another, in the same neighbourhood, who prayed at the opening of a service on another occasion: "Lord, come into the midst: come *now*! yes, come *now*! Thou mayest just as well come now at the beginning, Lord: for Thou wilt have to come sooner or later!" Surely "the Kingdom of heaven suffereth violence"—the violence of childlike, invincible faith: "and the violent take it by force"—the force of their Father's own words.

"Do you know," asked a faithful old Christian of his minister, "what my happiest religious seasons are? Guess!"

The minister named the reading of the Bible.

"No."

"The prayer-meetings?"

"No: these are very good; but I know of something better."

"The communion service, perhaps?"

"No, although I shall never forget some of them, when I have seen *Him*."

"Well, when you are alone with Him in prayer?"

"Yes, and no. You see, it is not exactly *in* prayer,

but when the prayer is over, and we are *chatting* together. Often, now, I cannot sleep at night; and then we chat for hours. Oh, it is delightful!"

Another, manifestly a brother in experience, said: "Jesus Christ is so good at conversation. He never tires; I always get tired before Him."

Do not such expressions, such experiences, show that thousands had learnt to pray in the children's way?

CHAPTER V

PRAYER: ITS VICTORIOUS POWER

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In addition to illustrations of the victory of prayer, which, practically, are found in every chapter, these instances may further cheer the wistful heart.

An old hearer, being asked what in the revival had constrained him to yield, answered: "Nothing at all that I know of, in *this* revival." Then he told them how, when he was a young man, a farm-servant, the neighbourhood had been visited by such another revival. One evening, after the day's toil, he was on his way to the village—not for the prayer-meeting, but for fun. As he followed a path through the fields, he heard voices on the other side of the hedge. He recognised them: they were two young men praying—praying, he felt, for him. He was arrested, but shook the effect from him, and pursued his way. But he could never silence the accent of those prayers: through the long years they haunted him. Both men who had knelt and prayed in the shadow of the hedge were dead, when, last year, he testified that but for those prayers—nearly

half a century old—he doubted if he would ever have found a Saviour.

One of the men rescued from the depths, in a quarry district, began from the first to pray for his "chums." Night after night he pleaded, with tears, with the insistence of the violent ones of the Kingdom, for their salvation, one by one. And one by one they came in—as if prayed into the Kingdom by this man's suppliant force. There only remained two, or three, at last: and one evening as he repeatedly prayed these came, one after another. When the last appeared he seemed for a moment dazed, and said, "Well, dear Lord, I don't know what to do next: I have come to the end of my list." But he found out that there is a way to enlarge the list, in the school of Christ.

One of the men brought in, at the very dawn of the revival, was a few days later on his knees. The meeting was proceeding, and if he prayed aloud at all, no one seemed to hear. But the minister, being personally interested in him as one of the first converts, could not help watching the face, earnest and strangely lighted up. Suddenly his hand went straight up, and a moment later he rose from his knees and sat down. From somewhere in the crowded building, some one said: "There is one here anxious to give himself to Christ"; and the refrain of *Diolch iddo* swept in waves of song over

the whole congregation. After some time, the minister watched the man again kneel, and without a doubt pray: several moments passed, the face again lit up, and the arm was lifted as before. "There is another here for Christ," shouted some one, and the congregation again joined in its thanksgiving. Once more vocal prayer budded forth. After a while this man knelt for the third time, to his half-silent prayer. For the third time the arm suddenly went up: the man rose, and sat down. "Here is another," shouted some one again. The three were companions of his in former ways of evil: he did not even know that the three were present as he knelt to pray time after time, nor could he explain to the minister why his arm went up.

Can the story of a soul be more briefly, more graphically told than in these words, punctuated as they were with a penitent's sobs?—"Is mother here?" "Yes." "Well, mother, I have had to give in at last. *Well done, mother!*" Who can tell how many prayers, what sufferings of soul, were rewarded in that one cry: "Well done, mother!"

At one place there had been since midday a marvellous ingathering of souls. And now, near midnight, among others brought in, was a wife, who asked the prayers of all for her husband. He had been earlier at the meeting, but had gone home soon after ten—disgusted. He had

gone to bed, but there was no sleep or rest for him. At last, in spite of himself, he got up; he could not remain in the house: he felt compelled to return to the chapel, not even taking time to change his slippers for his boots. He was a strong man, or was endued with new strength; for he made his way through the crowd, in spite of all hindrances, to give himself that midnight hour to the Saviour—to-day one of the most useful men in the church.

A young man, tenderly reared in a praying house, had drifted into evil ways. He had joined his companions early one evening at the favourite public-house: the drink was on the table before them. Laughing with the rest, he put forth his hand to take hold of the glass. Suddenly his face paled: his hand had left the glass untouched. He tried again, and seemed to fail. They laughed heartily, as at some unexplained joke. He resolutely put forth both hands, gripped the glass, but set it down again. "I can't touch it: I can't stop here." He rushed home, asking where his father was. "Where else but at the prayer-meeting?" they told him. He rushed to the chapel; and in spite of the crowds thronging the door, way was made for him, as he was recognised. Almost the first sound he heard was the voice of his own father in prayer, pleading for him. And the lad was beside him before he had risen from his knees.

The next incident has a dual message. It combines the awaking of a soul to its sin, with an answer to prayer.

A young man, thoughtful and well-read, who had been unanchored by intellectual doubts, stood up in a New Year's prayer-meeting with pale, frightened face. He made his way to the pulpit pew, in the usual manner of those wishing to take part. He read the narrative of Christ's temptation, and then addressed the congregation, his first words being: "I am a great sinner. I must be permitted to say that I am a sinner, or die." He went on: "Something weighs me down to the earth: I have felt something I never felt before. Oh! the distress I have been in since I entered this meeting! I have had a view of my sins, and at the sight of them some voice has told me that I have sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost, and so can never find pardon. But another and stronger voice tells me that the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses from all sin. It is the devil upbraiding me that my sins are more than can be forgiven, and it is the gentle Saviour who tells me that the virtue of His blood is sufficient to blot out sin from the conscience for ever. I give myself to Him now and for ever." He sat down, in tears, the congregation overflowing with praise. When the singing ceased, another young man stood up, trembling with almost intolerable joy:

" Blessed be God's name," he began, " for answering the prayer of such a poor creature as I am. I have prayed to-day for hours that God might save the soul of this dear brother—though he never knew that I prayed for him. His Name be praised—His Name be praised for ever ! "—and he sat down, his tears as though they were an overjoyed song.

The power of prayer was not to be measured by these individual victories. It subdued whole congregations : it diffused through the whole land an atmosphere that bathed in its warmth and light the soul of saint and sinner. An old man, faithfullest among the faithful, was made a prisoner in his house through illness when the revival started. As soon as he was able to cross the threshold he made his way to the chapel, and during the course of the meeting said—his own face as radiant as any : " Oh, dear ! what a transfiguration. Every face here is a new face to me to-night. I never saw you before looking like this. The revival is in your eyes, in your voices, and rests on your faces. I see you have been in the bright cloud on the mountain-top." This glow, frequently noticed during those prayerful months, was but the outward sign of souls triumphing in the presence and companionship of God.

CHAPTER VI

SIGNS AND VISIONS

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So vast, so all-absorbing a movement could not be without its mystic elements, unexplained though possibly not inexplicable. Voices in the air, visions, seemingly objective, of the blessed Saviour, mysterious lights: these, more or less definite, were so intimate a part of it, that the record would be incomplete and inadequate were they to be omitted or avoided. There is no pretence here of psychologically stating them, though it is attempted to keep as near as possible to the testimony as personally received.

One Saturday evening a minister was alone in his study, his mind filled with the thought of the revival, and the reports of its early days, when he began to wonder and ask anxiously if his church—Bethel—was to be visited? And was there anything he could do to help its coming? He had his sermons prepared for the morrow: should he give up the thought of preaching in the morning, and ask his people to hold a prayer-meeting? He

was still exercised with these questionings, when he heard a voice, as distinct in every syllable as if it were the living voice of some one in the room: "The revival will not come to Bethel." He was awed and disturbed, and felt more anxious than before; but he determined to give his people an opportunity of praying together in the morning. The deacons agreed to his suggestion; the service was begun, the order being left free. But as moment succeeded moment, the words of the previous night seemed to be more and more verified. Everything failed: prayer and song were as if chilled almost to death; and his own faith was almost giving way. He rose, and told them the experience of the voice in his study, and how troubled he had been. He had scarcely finished his brief narrative when a lady in the congregation knelt and prayed. Had she been asked a week before to do it, she would almost certainly have replied: "Me? oh, impossible!" I am not sure but that she would say it *now*. But that morning she was some one else. It was a *prayer*, and therefore indescribable. She had scarcely begun, before the whole congregagation seemed swept into the midst of God's gulf-stream: warm, melting, broadly flowing. The morning service became almost a part of the afternoon Sunday School. No district probably has been more richly, more lastingly blessed.

Christmas Sunday evening, 1904, a lad who had not long left school and commenced work in the quarries, was in his usual seat in one of the chapels at Bethesda. It was his custom to take notes of the sermon, and he had note-book in hand ready, as the hymn before the sermon was concluded. The preacher took a Christmas text: and of that actual service the lad remembers little more till near the conclusion of the sermon. He says that he remembers thinking a moment of the text, and then his attention was drawn to his arm: a wave of light was passing over it, and across his breast. He looked towards the pulpit: standing in it, as he somehow knew by instinct, was the apostle Paul. On the pulpit stairs John and Peter were standing. Paul was speaking and telling the people: "The revival will not come to you in Bethesda till you pray and try to be free of these bitter feelings"—the reference being to the painful divisions created in churches and even in families by the long and destructive labour dispute. That was the one message of the sermon. As he thought of it and pondered upon it, he looked again, and where John and Peter had stood, he saw two hands bearing the print of the nails. There was no face, no form; but he could see also the feet, and the hammer driving in the nails. There was no more until he heard the closing sentences of the sermon. But

apparently he was not fully awake to what happened, until, on his way home, he passed a certain gate, when it flashed upon him that he had not heard the actual sermon preached at all. So he told the story, quite simply and unaffectedly: it had greatly disturbed him, making him indeed feel ill for some days. The first society meeting he attended, he gave the narrative as he gave it me. Asking him, if there was a picture of the Crucifixion in his home, he said "No." A second question brought out the fact that he and another companion had agreed to read, each night before sleeping, the gospel narrative of the Crucifixion. Any one who has seen the havoc wrought on the social life of the people at Bethesda—now, we trust, slowly passing—by the dismissal of the workmen, will understand the anxiety of a naturally religious mind; and perhaps find explanation of the frame of the vision.

A young man, who had been brought up in a religious home, had fallen through drink. On the Sunday evening when he returned to his chapel, and to his Saviour, he explained why he had been constrained to come. During the preceding week he had heard a voice distinctly calling him by name: "Stephen, go to chapel three times next Sunday." It was—unmistakably to him—the voice of the mother who had prayed much for him, and who

was now dead. He mentioned it to his companions, and, naturally, they laughed at it. But he obeyed, and went, and was brought to Christ.

One evening, on the brow of a quiet hill—uprising into the hush of the skies from thronged, busy valleys—a farmer was being urged, by two neighbours, to come to the prayer-meetings. He had once been a professing Christian, but had drifted far into indifference. He tried in every way to get out of promising; but they were in earnest, and their persuasion had in it a strain of kindliness that made it hard even to seem to be rude, or unmoved. At last he promised to come, not that evening, but later in the week. Rejoicing, they turned their steps to the sanctuary—home, for generations, of many choice souls, of prayer, and remarkable awakenings. As soon as they had left him, he leapt over the fence, laughing to himself: "I have *done* those two again!" No sooner were the words uttered, than he heard a voice, out of the solitary twilight, with neither house nor human being near to account for it—the voice speaking in distinct tones and words: "The promise was not made to them, but to Me!" He ran across the fields to his house, forgetful of age. When he appeared, his look was that of a man trembling with fright. He told them, as he grew quieter, what had happened

to him. But he did not cancel his promise, as he had expected to do. He was in his place on the Thursday evening, the two neighbours little knowing how their appeal had been seconded.

The next case selected—that of the lights seen by Mrs. Jones, Egryn, Merionethshire—attracted considerable attention, quite disproportionate to its value as part of the revival. But it would be unfair to omit it, seeing so much was written, wisely and unwisely, regarding the matter. I will first of all state the case as it came to my personal knowledge in January, 1905, fresh from an interview with her in her own home, near Barmouth.

She had been religious from her childhood. Some seven years ago she lost her little boy, and four years later her only sister. Her faith in God was overclouded. She felt herself hardening against Him more and more. She lost taste for the services of the chapel, for the Bible, for prayer. Her husband was not a member, but a faithful attendant, while she, who was a member, stayed away more and more.

One Sunday evening, a year ago, she had found Sheldon's "In His Steps," and began to read, listlessly at first, and then with growing interest, almost awe. She returned to her chapel, and became a most faithful but silent helper, her only public

part being the giving out of a hymn. But when news came of the South Wales movement she was deeply moved, and at last asked her brother, who superintended the mission, or branch chapel, to announce meetings of prayer. She was full of expectation; but the first meeting, on a Monday evening, chilled her very heart. However, another was announced for the Thursday. It was better attended, and people took part more readily, she herself making the first attempt. There was now no doubt about continuing, night after night. She became, without knowing how, the leading worker in these meetings, possessing an influence that was new and strange, in winning others to take part, and leading others to Christ. In the daytime she visited and invited; in the evening she had her reward. When the fortnight was completed, to the day, fifty-one had been brought to Christ in that rural, thinly populated neighbourhood.

She gave many a striking incident of this fortnight's meetings, which I need not chronicle here. She made no reference to the signs, until my friend and I asked her. She answered as simply as if she were speaking about the fire on the hearth, that she had seen, almost from the first, each evening a fire or light between her and the hills which rise from the marshy shore—a quickly vibrating light, "as though full of eyes," so another described

it. It had revealed to her what to expect at the meetings? Yes, without fail. One evening she had interpreted the sign to mean four converts. But only three responded when the test was made in the crowded little chapel. "But there must be four," she said. No, there could not be; all the rest, except the three who had declared themselves that night, were already members. "But there ought to be four to-night," she repeated. No fourth could be found, until the door of the little vestibule was opened and one stood there halting between two opinions. The opening of the door and a kindly word of invitation brought the inquirer inside. And the four were completed. She had seen the light hovering over some houses on the hilltops; she was puzzled, for she thought there was no one in those houses unconverted, or at least out of church membership. But one day she was told by the Wesleyan minister at Barmouth and another friend who visited her that there was one old woman, in one of the houses, not now on Christ's side. "Ah, that must be it," she said. The two friends went up—found the woman in concern for her soul. Mrs. Jones herself visited her; she became one one of the fifty-one in that marvellous fortnight.

I have softened nothing in order to enhance credibility. She had visited several villages near her home, during the dark nights. The light, she

said, had frequently accompanied her—not a terrifying light, but gentle and calm, just showing her way as she walked.

Let me add some auxiliary data. That some mysterious lights were seen on this shore during those weeks is beyond doubt. Nor was this the first time for the coast of this bay to be so visited. They have been reported before—especially one winter, in 1649. Too many accredited witnesses have seen them this time to put it down to excited imagination.

The problem still remains unsolved. But there can be no reasonable doubt of the appearance of these lights, at the time and place. Afterwards they grew, no doubt, into a sort of foolish cult. Some, from mischief, made lights appear where Mrs. Jones went to conduct missions; at other times, natural lights were taken to be extraordinary. But the earlier phenomena stand by themselves—possibly natural, but in any case abnormal. There still remains to be explained their association with her movements, and their alleged clairvoyant signs.*

The last illustration selected has a character of

* In the Transactions of the Psychical Research Society for December, 1905, will be found a careful *résumé* of the data, with several kindred phenomena of the Welsh revival.

its own. It took place on the first Sunday morning of 1904—*i.e.* ten months before the revival was a common report. A minister was leaving his chapel, which is situated in a poor neighbourhood, after the service. He was the last to leave, except two of his deacons. As he stood by himself in the vestibule, a child came up the steps, and passed him. She half-opened the inner door, when he turned and asked her: "What do you want, my little one?" "I wanted to see Jesus Christ, sir." For him, the incident closes there. He cannot remember anything of what became of the child. He had never seen her before; he has not seen her since, although he is acquainted with every family in the neighbourhood. He felt at the time a strangeness in her look which he could not explain. Sometimes he wonders if he imagined it all. If so, it was very real; for the moment he reached his study, he fell on his knees, profoundly affected. Before the year was out, he was one of the chief workers in the revival, and remains so still.

We have not omitted this portion, because in almost every neighbourhood one heard of some such experiences of either voice or vision. Their peril is manifest. The moment they are taken to be some special favour of heaven, superior to the quieter, the more inward rewards of faith, that

moment they become a temptation of the soul, and a delusion. As inspirations, they may well bear fruit; as superstitions, they are apples of Sodom. Every revival, through all the centuries, has known them, in both ways.

CHAPTER VII

THE UNVEILING OF THE CROSS

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And now surveying, as far as one can, the whole from the beginning, what can account for it all but the power of the unveiled Cross? In Wales as elsewhere during recent years many things had risen to dim the brightness of its glory—some from the very heart of the church, some from the intellectual collisions of the age. Suddenly, to our view, towering not only "o'er the wrecks of Time," but over its proudest peaks as well, appeared the Cross, high and lifted up. Men and women who had all their lives looked on the hills of home, now in winter's grey now in summer's gold, saw clearly the "green hill far away," and their dear Lord hanging on the middle Cross of three.

Ever in the unveiling of the Cross there is an interchanging sense of grief and joy—

"Did e'er such love and sorrow meet?"

So here: the most effective hymns, the most subduing prayers of this revival were in the key either

of the sufferings of Jesus in the Garden and on Calvary, or of the gracious wonder of His atoning love—of both, indeed, in one. The thought of "the cold, unquiet night," of "His moanings at midnight outpoured," of His going forth to the Hill and giving Himself to be nailed willingly—this thought, in the warm, dewy atmosphere of those months, became a present scene, with inexpressible personal significance: "who loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*." The other hymnal note was an exclamation of ever fresh surprise at the vastness, the condescension, the triumph of Love—vast as flowing oceans, resistless as a mighty flood-tide. There was no *dies iræ* to terrify, but a *dies caritatis* to win its way as summer through a waiting wood. Sin—or at least vice—was seldom denounced: and yet the horror of a wicked past was never more real than it has been during these two years.

"O Lord," cried one in his prayer, "I have only been for three months Thy disciple. They have been very happy three months; but behind them are twenty-five black years. I can myself do nothing with them; I must leave Thee to settle with them."

Young people, school-children even, as well as the hardened "stalwarts" of evil (to use one of their own terms), saw their own heart's sin stand out

in black tempestuous relief, from the sorrowful but redeeming glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

Other revivals, too, if they have not begun here, have sooner or later arrived here. The eighteenth century revival in Wales first breathed Sinai's air; but its return was to Calvary. Daniel Rowlands spent some years preaching "the stormy Law"; Howell Harris, at first, made "the cloud his abode, and the thunder his dwelling-place." His quieter neighbour, Philip Pugh, warned Rowlands to preach the grace of the Gospel to the people: instead of leaving them in terror, to apply the balm of Gilead to their wounded, pierced conscience. "But that faith I do not possess in its power," Rowlands confessed. "Seek it, and preach it till you feel it," was the paradoxical but not useless reply.* Afterwards the ripe hour of the Spirit came, when Rowlands, reading the litany, in repeating the Passion phrase—"By Thine agony and bloody sweat"—was so arrested by it that he could not proceed: he and the congregation suddenly felt as if they were bowed down by an irresistible hand. From that day the effect of his preaching helped to move and change Wales. So in the

* Compare Peter Böhler's advice to John Wesley: "Preach faith till you have it; and then, because you have it, you will preach faith."

great ministry of Oberlin, in the Ban de la Roche, there arrived a day of which he wrote : "I preached no more upon the pains of hell." And with the completer gospel of the Love of Christ he changed those wintry valleys of the Vosges into sanctuaries of piety and gladness.

In the revival of 1859–60, in one district the fire which had begun to burn, kindled into flame and power in this fashion. A preacher—one of the least gifted of all his brethren—was preaching on the text : "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." The first half-hour or so was hard and dull, and the disappointment of the congregation was becoming more and more keen. But somehow he was led to say—"Jesus Christ thinks much of His Cross." It was said with no particular emphasis, or apparent effectiveness, but with the word a young woman rose in the gallery, and with deep feeling exclaimed : "Oh ! oh ! I too think much of the Cross. In it I expect to have my life !" And the Breath came, and the valley lived.

So now, among the autumn winds of 1904, a voice was heard on the banks of the Llwchwr, proclaiming the same unchanging Love, as it shone and shines forth from the throbbing mysteries of the Cross. And somehow people, who had grown grey in sin, began to feel ashamed, and were stricken

with remorse; young people lost taste for vacant pleasures: there were confessions, sobbings, silent tears, struggles, open victories; and the refrain grew richer as rough voices softened in singing—

"Oh the Lamb, the gentle Lamb!"

The Cross stood unveiled, and a light—not from the soldiers' lanterns—fell on the head of One bowed to the ground beneath the olive-trees. The Cross stood forth, high and clear; and tens of thousands *looked*: looked, as Vinet lucidly remarks, "with a look more simple than that of observation; with a look which looks and nothing more." Men and women looked, and felt they must pray. Prayer-meetings sprung up everywhere and flowered, as a valley, grown impatient with winter's too long delay grasps at the first spring-day's sunshine, and stands at noon in a tender mist of opening flowers. Hundreds of old and young, late at night, solitary or in twos and threes, all over the country, were trudging home by many a rough mountain path, across many a wind-swept moor, two, three, even up to six or eight miles—never knowing that the way was long or the night stormy. Or, more wonderful still, from these meetings men were going home past doors of brazen temptation, which they could not have passed a few weeks before without entering, even at life's risk: now they passed,

with a song in their heart and probably on their lips :

"Wondrous love !—vast as the ocean ! "

They had seen the Cross unveiled. The light, the saving light, the song, the blood-purchased song, crossed a hundred hills, and filled a hundred glens, from Prescelly to Snowdon. Everywhere one met quiet radiant faces—among miners and quarrymen, among sailors and shepherds, in farms and cottages, in places of business and studious offices.

When Bernard of Clairvaux preached from the top of the hill at Vezelai, there rose from the sea of faces, we are told, at first a murmur, then a shout of " Crosses, crosses "—and his Crusade was made. But here at the dawn of a more practical century the " sea of faces " waited for no art-wrought cross : but yet men and women, smitten with the grief and triumph of Calvary, have risen to the labour and gladness of holier life and more effectual crusades. Many a debtor remembered his debt, many a drunkard returned to his hearth in his right mind, many a prodigal found the welcome of home, the grey and the aged saw a light at eventide and yielded after threescore years and ten of disobedience. There are disappointments ; but " count your blessings " : they are far more. Some have gone back ? But think of those who stand—and thank God.

The Cross has saved thousands : it has sanctified

thousands more. There are to-day large churches giving to a mission both heart and hand : two years ago the mission was scarcely, if at all, thought of. There are to-day hosts of young people—standing then at the parting of the ways, almost drawn into mere aimlessness of living—to-day they think, to-day they seek to serve. There are to-day, especially though not exclusively among the *younger* ministers, those who have found a voice to speak for God, with clearer accents, with warmer heart. Among the boys and girls a work of grace has begun, which, if the Christian churches do their part, will bear some of the richest fruit of the centuries in service for Christ at home and far afield.

Nor let any heart grow faint. The unveiled Cross has in it fresh sources of strength and of victory. Here a leader may fail us, there a comrade may fall : when was it otherwise in any season of the Church's renewal ? "Jesus still leads on." What if some new glory of the Cross make forms and methods we have loved grow obsolete ? The Cross can create new delights, and inspire new songs ; for

"The Lamb that was dead is living still."

One of those who had been faithful and devoted before the revival was deeply moved in her experience by its influences and retains the blessing.

It made her ask, in her humble sphere, with passionate earnestness: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" One night she was unable to sleep: she continued praying and communing till it was near morning. Then, as she affirmed in clear, simple faith, "I saw Jesus Christ—saw Him distinctly." I thought of how Evan Roberts had seen Him—Captain of the host, with glittering sword. I asked if He appeared to her so? "Oh, no: He was *kneeling*." I am not here concerned to separate the objective vision from the subjective mood: the form matters little. He fitted Himself for her need. There is a sword-girt Saviour; there is a kneeling Intercessor. Wales has need to remember the Christ of the camp and the sanctuary, lest she betray her trust on the threshold of this new century.

The very experience last related suggests a possible peril: what if the Cross become too objective—merely the glory of a vision, fountain of ecstasies? The Cross that saves a nation must be permanently ethical and social—brightening the village, purifying the town and populous valley, sweetening the charity of the churches, adorning the home. It must not only be present in the nation's life, but central: diffusing its purity through its trade and its toil, its culture and its literature, its hearths and its churches. Shall Wales make itself worthy of its great day of the unveiled Cross?

APPENDIX

HYMNS OF THE REVIVAL

As references are made in the text to favourite hymns of the revival, it may help the reader if we supply an English version of some of these. The spiritual "love-song" of the nation was the hymn of the late Rev. W. Rees, D.D. (*Hiraethog*). From a small collection of Tunes and Hymns of the Welsh Revival,—entitled *Songs of Victory* (Wrexham: Hughes & Son),—by the writer, we give this translation of the hymn:

Wondrous Love, unbounded Mercy!
Vast as oceans in their flood;
Jesus, Prince of Life, is dying—
Life for us is in His blood!
Oh! what heart can e'er forget Him,
Who can cease His praise to sing?—
Wondrous Love! for ever cherished,
While the Heavens with music ring.

Rent on Calvary asunder
Were the fountains of the deep;
Nor within their ancient channels
Could the streams of mercy keep:

See the overflowing torrents
Of redeeming Love and Grace;—
Peace divine and perfect Justice
Now a guilty world embrace!

The next verse we give is from the original of Williams of Pantycelyn, author of "Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah":

Through the precious blood of Jesus
Shall the mighty be subdued;
Through the precious blood of Jesus
Are the weak with strength endued:
Bring the blessing,
O thou Breath from Calvary!

The other verse, frequently referred to (*e.g.*, page 138), was written by a blacksmith, Thomas Lewis, of Talley, Carmarthenshire (1759–1842). The eight lines of the original are all that remain to preserve his name. The following is a free translation:

Recalling the sweat as of blood,
His moanings at midnight outpoured;
His back with deep furrowing ploughed,
His grief from His Father's own sword;
His going to Calvary's hill,
To be nailed to the Cross by His love;—
Recalling, what tongue can be still?
What heart but pity shall move?

The verse so frequently sung to the tune of

"Huddersfield" was not native, but a translation of President Davis's hymn—

Great God of wonders, all Thy ways
Are matchless, godlike, and divine.

The refrain,

Diolch iddo
Byth am gofio llwch y llawr,

is taken from a verse by Morgan Rhys, contemporary and co-worker of Williams of Pantycelyn. A literal translation would be

Ever praise Him
For remembering dust of earth.

But a better English equivalent was found in the well-known hymn of Williams:

Songs of praises
I will ever give to Thee.

This refrain came to be sung, in either language, as each convert was announced. When sung in Welsh the penultimate line was often varied by the congregation—the tune permitting a longer phrase, by a quickening of the time: *e.g.*,

Praise Him, ever praise Him:
He is ever blessed:
Crown Him, ever crown Him:
Who can cease to love Him?
—For remembering dust of earth.

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